



Mid Murray Landcare SA

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Activity Update March 2021

This activity update is for the month of March. If you would like to be on our mailing list and receive this free update, please email Aimee Linke on the above email address or view on webpage. These projects are made up of several sources of funding including Grass Roots Grants, a WIRES Landcare Grant and the Iron Grass Grassland Project plus some other small grants and contract work. Rowena Danks formerly from Murray Mallee LAP is supporting the delivery of some of these projects.

Meldanda

1. Mid Murray Landcare SA would like to apologise for implying that our meeting last month with Grace Love at Meldanda was in her role on the School Governing Council, Grace was meeting with Chris Tugwell and Aimee Linke to talk about Meldanda as a private person and was not representing the Cambrai School.
2. Managed the volunteers, camp bookings, provision of materials and equipment and all necessary administrations including invoicing and banking for Meldanda. Kept neighbors informed of any camp bookings.
3. Mannum Horse Riding Club used Meldanda for a riding event, there were 12 riders.
4. We have had several campers over March, all were to come to the Dark Sky Reserve to see the stars.
5. Volunteers Andy and new volunteer Paul Martin have been busy this month with re-directing the down pipes on the recreation hall so they feed into more than one small tank, this will make better use of the rainwater harvested. Andy and Paul have also been doing general maintenance work, watering and assisting with the solar bore pump issues we have been experiencing.
6. The solar bore pump is no longer in operation it has been damaged by water getting into the pump. We have sought several different quotes and have decided to use the existing generator and install a Grundfos pump, this is at a cost of \$2700. Aimee has gained financial support for this through the INTG project, this is essential to continue watering the gardens, SPA and operate the camp site.
7. The volunteers and Aimee met on site with Alex Emmins a District Officer for Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board to assess the large cactus on the banks of the Marne which has more than doubled in size over the last 15 years. We sought advice on best way to control it, so it doesn't spread downstream and to the neighbors. The Mid Murray Council is going to help us with this weed issue.
8. Greg Kirk dropped of a large sink in a cupboard that we can use at Meldanda, maybe up

at the back shed.



Figure 1 Cactus at Meldanda that needs to be controlled.

Community Nursery

9. Volunteers Brenton and Mick have been busy thinning out some of the *Eucalyptus* species that have propagated. They have propagated *Rhagodia parabolica*, did cuttings of *Correa alba* and sowed *Wahlenbergia* sp for the SPA. Mick has also been pruning back some of the plants in the front garden. Brenton has been adding a frame around our hardening up area to see if we can reduce the wind impacts on the watering system.
10. We have been selling some plants already for the season and have had orders for others.
11. Site visit to Lee Smith to provide some advice on plants to grow on his property near Cambrai, Moody rd. (22/03/21)

Committee & other

12. Managed the office, volunteers and all necessary administrations including monthly payment of bills, reports, managing webpages and social media posts, scanned all receipts and reconciled monthly accounts in XERO.
13. Supported monthly meeting on 11th of March, kindly hosted by committee member Sally Arnold at Wildwood Park Sanctuary. After the meeting Sally gave us a tour and introduced us to the animals there.
14. Was in part successful with an application for funding from the Highways and Byways 2021 Small Grants Program with an approved grant of \$1200 for a workshop on 'Growing Acacias in the semi-arid zone of South Australia'.
15. Nadine Brown picked up a box of her Simply Saltbush books, since the publication of her Gawler Ranges one there has been renewed interest in her first publication.

16. Met George King to discuss the delivery of a workshop at Johns Christian Reserve as part of a Small Grass Roots Grant through Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board. George ran a plant identification workshop with 7 volunteers, and they removed a trailer load of weeds, mainly *Galenia* sp. (23/03/21)
17. The next round of Grass Roots Grants was announced, started the application and seeking letters of support. This is the funding that helps support the Landcare group with supporting volunteers, Meldanda, the Community Nursery, WPP project and other community and landholder support.
18. Supported the Regent Parrot Recovery Team with a Murray–Darling Healthy Rivers Program Small grant application. The project if successful will undertake an all of river survey, which will start from Walker Flat, provide information for E-Watering sites and provide landholders with tubestock of Regent Parrot food plants.



Figure 2 Committee meeting at Wildwood Park Sanctuary.



Figure 3 Volunteers at John Christian Reserve workshop

River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve

19. We held our Dark Sky meeting in the Cambrai Council Chambers on 12th March.
20. We have had several campers at Meldanda over March, all were to come to the Dark Sky Reserve to see the stars.
21. David Bennett dropped of new telescope that has been donated to the group.
22. Have been getting more enquiries about Meldanda for camping in the DSR, have sent out the fact sheet and other information on Meldanda.

Irongrass Grasslands Project

23. Trialled Themeda propagation, collected seed from SPA that may had been sitting there for a while. Soaked some in smoke water for 1 day and some for 1 week. The 1-day soaking had better germination. May try this again and count seed for accurate results.
24. We have had 8mm of rain on the trial site at Meldanda in March.
25. Volunteers Sheralee, Cryss and Aimee collected seed from the SPA's; including *Setaria constricta*, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, *Convolvulus remotus*, *Minuria leptophylla*, *Chloris*

truncata (Windmill grass), *Glycine rubiginosa* (Twining Glycine), *Eryngium rostratum* (Blue devil). Paul and Sheralee cut back the *Bothriochloa macra* (Red-leg grass) and sucked up all the seed with the blower vac. Cryss and Sheralee cut back the *Digitaria brownii* (Cotton panic grass).

26. **Meldanda trial** - Took the photo points of the trial site at Meldanda, can see some remnant grasses and the chenopods are doing well like *Atriplex semibaccata* and *Enchylaena tomentosa* (Ruby Saltbush).
27. **Wicking bed trial** - Landholder Georgie Keynes set up some exclusion wire around the trial as Kangaroos were grazing it (12/03/21). Volunteer Brenton topped up water 20 litres (08/03/21). Brenton fixed up leaking drum of water and topped it up (15/03/21). Aimee and Mick took barrel of water to fill up drum 16/03/21).
28. **Landholder Trials** – Made some edits with Nicola Barnes to Management Plans and prepared them for upcoming visits. Nicola and Aimee met with Brian and Jo Sleep near Terowie, to do the pre-trial interviews, run through the Management plan and contract. We also marked out where the next fenceline is going for the trial site. 25/03/21
29. **Landholder Trials** – Nicola and Aimee met with landholders Greg and Liz Hall to do the pre-trial interviews, run through the Management plan and contract. We also marked out where one of the fence lines are going for the trial site. 26/03/21



Figure 4 Sheralee and Paul cutting back Red-leg grass.



Figure 5 Ruby Saltbush in Meldanda trial site.

Western Pygmy Possums

30. Don Lester and Aimee sent some information to Janet Klein on making boxes, data sheets and our brochure. Janet is running a WPP project for Hills Biodiversity, in the Adelaide Hills.
31. Inspected boxes that have been installed at Wildwood Park Sanctuary. Sally has had WPP breeding in some of her boxes, and we found leaves in 2 boxes that the possums had

used (11/03/21).

32. Rowena and Aimee site visit to landholder at Stockyard Plains, Bruce Ohlmeyer, we gave him some more possum boxes to set up since he has purchased more land. We inspected his installed boxes with the assistance of 4 of his boys, they enjoyed using the endoscope camera and gps unit (19/03/21).
33. Backed up Peter Lee's camera trap photos that Rowena posted to me on usb, there are many more great photos to share.
34. Rowena and Aimee met Peter Lee on site to install 3 more WPP boxes near the old bat boxes that have had WPP nesting in them (30/03/21).
35. Shared Bruce Ohlmeyer's story of a WPP found in 2007 at Stockyard Plains, shared this on the WPP FB Page. Rowena and Aimee want to hear your Western Pygmy Possum stories. Have you ever seen a Western Pygmy Possum at your place? Tell us your story and where it happened and help us build a picture of where these cute little animals have lived and been found.

[\(11\) Western Pygmy Possums | Facebook](#)



Figure 6 Peter Lee installing boxes



Fig 7 Sally Arnolds WPP box inspection



Fig 8 Ohlmeyer WPP box inspection.

WIRES

36. Site visit with Wendy Avery and Kate Jenkins from Worlds End Conservation Group at their house site south of Burra near Hopkins Creek CP. We discussed the upcoming Waterhouse Workshop and supporting an event at their property to make WPP boxes and nest baskets to instal at Hallelujah Hills.
37. Met Barry Wright in Burra to pick up the Anabat Detector that he set up at Mokota CP, Burra and Hiltaba.
38. Visited with Don Lester to drop off prototype nest basket and plan the upcoming

workshop we will support in Burra with the Waterhouse Group.

39. Site visit with John Neal to look at potential sites near Brady Creek to install WPP boxes after the Waterhouse Group workshop in April. John has some land where the Lavender Federation Trail and the Heysen Trail meet near the Tothills, it looks like a good location to set up some boxes. John has a site at Inspiration Point where there were some naturally regenerating trees, we will provide him with some mesh guards to protect them from grazing.
40. Site visit with Brenton Mosey who has some of the Tothill Ranges on his property, this will be a great location to set up some WPP boxes. Brenton was also interested in some nectar plants and we will provide him with some mesh tree guards for some Sheoak that are naturally regenerating.
41. Met in Kapunda with Kate Jenkins to drop of Anabat Detector to be used at Read Creek near Hopkins CP where *Vespadelus finlaysoni* was recorded during the MEGA Microbat project.
42. Updated NY Landscape Board staff on project activity in their region with this project, provided a map of proposed locations for box installation after the Waterhouse Group workshop in April.
43. Updated Professor Steve Donnellan from the SA Museum on the site visits to assess proposed locations for box instalments after the Waterhouse Group workshop upcoming in April.

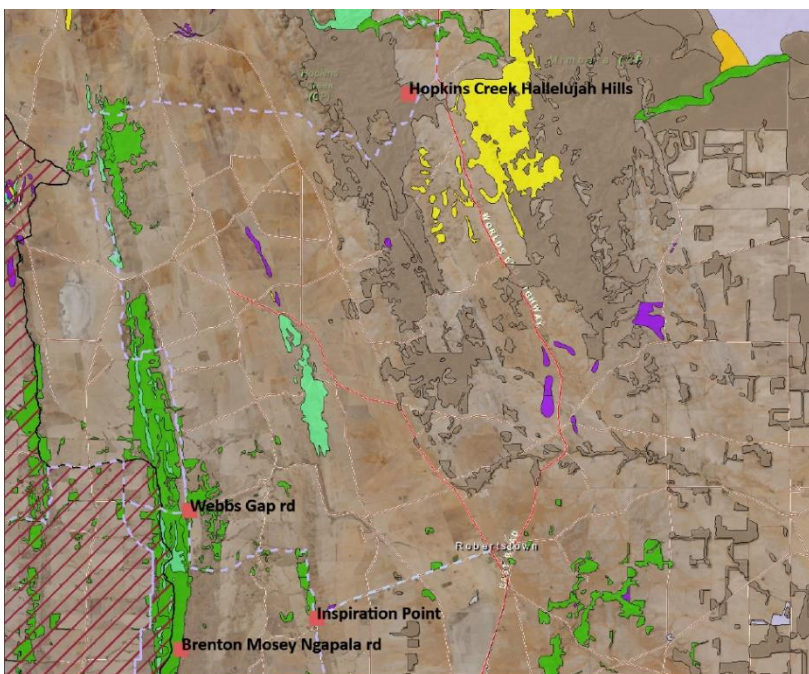


Figure 9 Map of proposed sites for WPP box instalments.



Fig 10 Wendy Avery, Aimee Linke and Kate Jenkins

Murray Mallee Landcare Projects

44. Rowena Danks and Aimee Linke audited a Seed Production Area (SPA) at Frahn's which is east of Berri in the Riverland (19/03/21). Some of the plants were still growing well considering they hadn't been irrigated in a long time, the matting however had seen better days.
45. Rowena Danks has booked a date for the Bee Workshop, which will be the 20th May to align with World Bee Day



Figure 11 Frahn's SPA in need of repair.

Microbats — also see WIRES project

46. Inspected some Microbat boxes at Wildwood Park Sanctuary, it was hard to get a photo inside the box but we could hear bats in there.
47. Met with Amanda Pearce who borrowed the Anabat detector to set up at several different sites. Gave Amanda 2 bat boxes to install.
48. Rowena and Aimee gave Peter Lee some bat boxes to install. Inspected established bat boxes at Peter Lee's where we have had WPP nesting and the snake visit, captured an image of a little bat still in there.
49. Had a dead Microbat dropped off to the office that was found in Mannum. Gave the landholder Clive Kiernan a bat box to install.
50. Dropped of Anabat detector to Bruce Ohlmeyer to find out what species he has at Stockyard Plain and 2 bat boxes to install.



Figure 12 Inspecting bat boxes at Wildwood Park Sanctuary. Fig 13 Bat found in bat box at Lee's