



Mid Murray Landcare SA
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Activity Update June 2022

This activity update is for the month of June 2022. 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 from varied sources of funding including Grassroots Grants, the Iron Grass Grassland Project, Healthy Rivers Grant plus other small grants and contract work.

Meldanda

1. Aimee 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.
2. Volunteers Wayne, Andy, and Paul maintained and cleaned Meldanda facilities, managed the irrigation and prepared firewood.
3. Volunteers Wayne and Paul plants in the Fire-retardant display garden were munched out by a kitten (baby rabbit) they were most disappointed, especially considering the garden is "rabbit proof".
4. Campers-eight adults and seven children camped over a weekend at Meldanda and were very happy they got to see a wombat. Another family of campers stayed overnight because there was no moon and therefore good to see the stars.
5. St Joseph's School from Renmark will visit Meldanda in August to come and see the Butterfly Garden, there will be 60 students. We are working with Cambrai Primary School to see what other activities we can do with the group.
6. Aimee received a lovely card from the Riverland Field Naturalist Group thanking her for the tour she provided of Meldanda.
7. We held a volunteer BBQ at Meldanda to thank the weekly volunteers for all their support.

Community Nursery

8. Volunteers Sheralee, Mick, David and Brenton have continued with weeding and potting on seedlings, including *Allocasuarina verticillata*.
9. Aimee has still been busy putting together plant orders for landholders, including a property at The Crossing near Mannum 150 plants, another landholder took another 300 plants for their projects and an order for 150 for a property near Rockleigh.
10. We had some people come in who have a property at Peterborough who wanted some plants, they were talking about maybe growing some cactus as they already had one plant there, they showed me a photo of it and it was a Weed Of National Significance *Opuntia robusta* aka Wheel Cactus, I gave them one of the Cactus resources books and

told them how they could safely and effectively to get rid of it. I also said their local Landscape Board would be a good contact.

11. Landholder Mark Metcalf picked up his tubestock and so did Neville Schultz who has been planting up his Marne River property for several years.
12. Sowed some more *Billardiera cymosa* for Rowena's SPA project and for stock at the nursery.
13. Volunteer Cryss did the stocktake for the year, we have almost 6000 plants in the nursery.

Committee & other

14. Managed the office, volunteers and all necessary administrations including monthly payment of bills, reports, invoicing, managing webpages and social media posts, scanned all receipts and reconciled monthly accounts in XERO. We had a few motor vehicle issues and the alternator needed to be replaced after it fell off!
15. Sent out agenda, minutes, correspondence list, and financial report for the month to the Committee, we held our monthly meeting at Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board Office in Cambrai.
16. Registered the National Tree Planting Day project with Sedan Recreation Park that will be held on the 31st of July to plant along their western boundary.
17. Had a phone interview with Marnie Wylde from Highways and Byways about the Acacia Field Day, she wrote an article for their next newsletter that will be out in August.
18. Provided information on koala sightings in the region to Natasha Wilczek from Flinders University who is doing a preliminary survey of Koalas.
19. We were successful with some Grassroots Grants we applied for including 'Landcare in the Mallee 2023' \$37,000 ex GST, 'Landcare in the Murray 2023' \$68,100 ex GST and as a project sponsor for 'Feasibility of maintaining threatened River Blackfish in the Marne River under a drying climate \$3,080 ex GST
20. Sent landholder Shane McGrath some information on Little Corella control, there was some interesting work done by the University of South Australia by Philip Roetman and Annette Scanlon [little-corellas-a-way-forward-gen.pdf \(environment.sa.gov.au\)](https://environment.sa.gov.au/little-corellas-a-way-forward-gen.pdf)
21. We received an RAA Grass Roots Grant of \$3000 to go towards supporting the protection of wildlife in the region, thank to a letter our chairperson Chris Tugwell wrote about the carnage in the region.

Seed production Areas

Rowena Danks – In conjunction with funding provided by M&R Landscapes Board Ecology programs has purchased materials to install netting later in the year to protect *Billardiera cymosa*, and irrigation supplies for both SPAs.

Honey Bees

Rowena Danks - Link local producers (honey and cropping/grazing) to National programs that support honey bee health or increased production. 1 communication activity (newsletter article or direct email update)

The Discover Bees article will be postponed to 22/23 as the program is not quite ready for promotion yet. Once it is ready I will promote it - it should be a very interesting project once it is available.

A Pollination Update email was sent to the pollinator interest email list (72 people) who have registered for pollinator related webinars and workshops). The update covered 2 national programs that support honey and native bee health and also two articles that provide information on latest research and information related to native bees in our area.

A guide to find native bees in your state Promotion of the Plan Bee Pollination Webinar - A national Agrifutures Australia program;

A Bee Friendly Farming Certification information article with links - a follow up to the webinar held in May; an

An article on Native Bee capacity for pollination with links to the Bee Aware website.

Regent Parrots

Two projects combined

Building contemporary understandings of Regent Parrot persistence within the South-Australian Murray-Darling Basin to enable improved on ground recovery actions” - Healthy Rivers Grant

And

DEW Grant - *Supporting landholders to conserve and support Regent Parrot habitat on private land.*

Promote outcomes of the Regent census via media release and facebook posts. 3 events

Aimee and Rowena promoted the program through several posts and we had a lot of interest in the program from these posts. The ABC Riverland Radio interviewed Tim Field and a link to listen to the interview is below. Rowena also developed an information sheet with species list for people who are keen to establish the plants on their property but weren't involved in this particular program.

https://www.abc.net.au/riverland/programs/breakfast/natives-to-help-regent-parrots/13951476?fbclid=IwAR35RqG1rVSdxdpS8FYFvhr9FP3iAlfY2mnW4qi-M0td0bbchX1uw0NP7_I



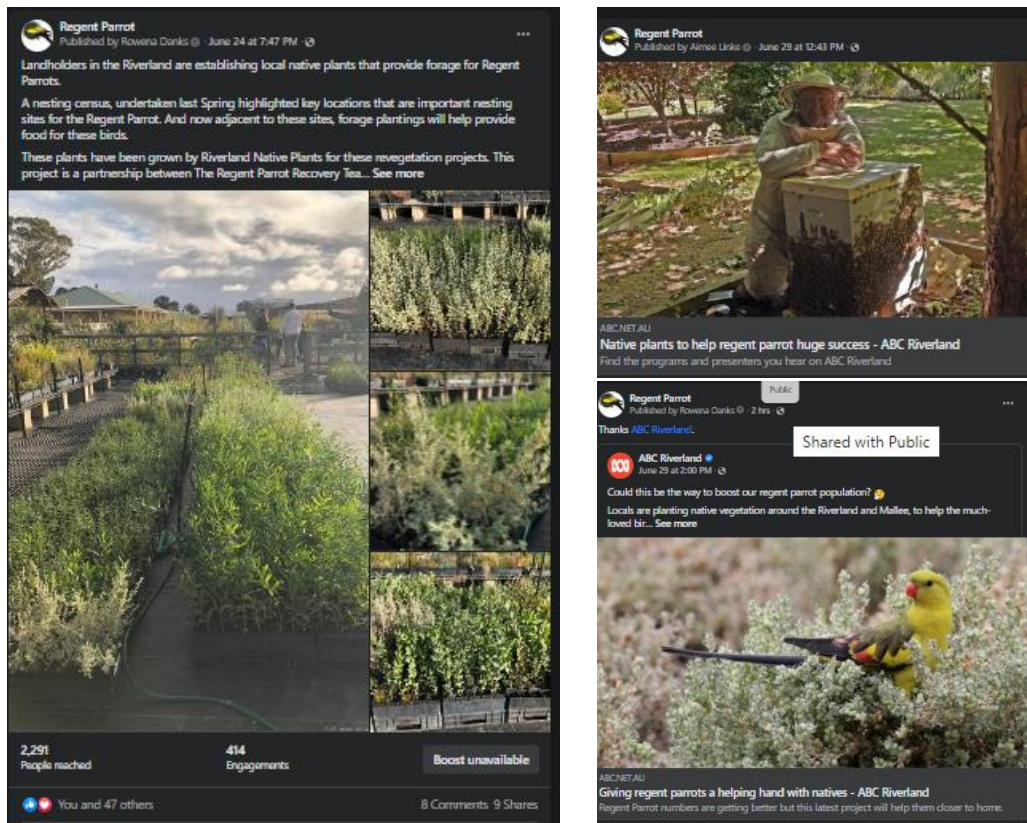


Figure 1 Facebook Posts

Site selection, site preparation, planting composition and supportive actions will be discussed with landholders to ensure foraging plants persist long term. This will include advice around where and when to plant and supplementary watering. Estimate of at least 10 onsite landholder visits to discuss planting strategies.

22. Rowena - Landholders have been contacted and site visits have been carried out at 6 sites. Aimee came along with me to the final site visit at Aroona Almond Orchards



Figure 2 Aimee and Kelvin Tresize at Aroona Farm looking at a former revegetation site.

where they have already begun a large-scale revegetation program and have 2 sites, they will be planting forage species for Regent Parrots.

Coordinate batching of tubestock for each site taking part in the project and distribution or collection for landholders. Note tubestock will be paid for by Mid Murray Landcare SA. Estimated to be approximately 6,250 tubestock targeting observed preferred Regent food sources:

23. On 24th June Aimee and Rowena went up to Wilabalangaloo and Riverland Native Plants to batch up over 7000 seedlings grown by these nurseries. With help from Tim Field, we got all the seedlings batched up and ready for landholders to pick up for their revegetation projects.



Figure 3 and 4 Seedlings ready to be batched up at Riverland Native Plants



Engage with specific landholders around the opportunities for Regent supportive practices in orchards

- 24. Pomona Farms are enthusiastic about designing their forage planting as a decoy crop and Phil Barron and I will be helping them to do this through the decoy crop project.
- 25. Aroona Farms are establishing their revegetation to support local native species and bees in their orchards and are already undertaking supportive practices such as leaving seedling plants including annual weeds for birds and bees to utilise.
- 26. Costa Produce, who have several sites around SA and process almonds from several regions, expressed interest in being involved in the programs especially for smaller parrots in almonds. They are very interested in taking part in decoy crop programs.
- 27. Two other Almond growers that were identified in the Regent Parrot census have also been contacted to provide information, contact details and an offer for Parks and

Wildlife to be available to speak to them to support the management of Regent Parrots and other native bird species in their orchards.

Engage with specific landholders on the value of their properties for Regent Parrots and the potential opportunities for formal protection of these sites.

28. Four other landholders on private land without Almond orchards, that were identified in the Regent Parrot census have also been contacted to extend an invitation to be involved in the Regent Parrot Recovery Team programs, and an offer for Parks and Wildlife to be available to speak to them to support the management of Regent Parrots and other native bird species in their orchards.

Regent Parrot Decoy Crop Project

‘Natural vs Horticultural – Regent Parrot use of the landscape’

- 29. Rowena - Forage species seedlings have been batched up with Aimee's help and some of these will be used for the decoy crop project.
- 30. Phil Barron will provide technical advice to support the delivery of a fact sheet that Rowena will produce after the site is established.
- 31. Aimee – Phone progress report with Phil McNamara to provide an update on the project to allow the rest of the funds to be released.

River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve

- 32. Pipeline mural complete (Chris met with artist Jack Fran); huge thanks to Bill Nehmy, Palmer Community, SA Water (for \$10,000 funding) and Dulux (for the paint)
- 33. Chris met with Dark Sky musicians at Elder Conservatorium re possible Meldanda performance in 2023
- 34. Chris met with Leila at Cambrai School re possible giant sundial at Meldanda (Leila has been appointed as Principal for the next five years)
- 35. Leila and Chris O'Keefe have agreed floodlights in main street outside school can be removed.
- 36. Chris met with James Calvert (Torrens University) re Internship (30 international design students enrolled)
- 37. Launch of Dark Sky tram and SATC Dark Sky tourism promotion
- 38. Chris advised Alexandrina Council on possible Dark Sky Community application to IDA for Clayton Bay
- 39. Chris had discussions with Jake McVicar & Don Bursill re participation in October Space Conference at Lot 14. Don has received an invitation for us to speak at the Conference (Council has agreed to fund a trade display) - possible speakers include Ben Scales, Chris Tugwell, SA Science Minister & Prof. Brian Schmidt (Nobel Prize winner). Aim is to create links with Space community, promote Reserve as a base for space facilities and seek potential sponsors for Reserve.
- 40. Chris met with Dawn Stewart, Andy Glen & Bill Nehmy re application for 'Emerging Event' funding from SA Tourism Commission for Dark Sky arts festival.

- 41. Loaned out our box of binoculars for the Dark sky trip on the PS Marion.
- 42. Held the monthly Dark Sky Committee Meeting at Cambrai on 10th June 2022.



Figure 4 One of the planets on the Pipeline mural.

Irongrass Native Grasslands Project

- 43. Rainfall at the trial site in June was 16mm
- 44. **SPA** – Sheralee, Cryss and cleaned the last of the seed for the season, there was a total of 24kg, including a whopping 4.5kg of *Convolvulus remotus* and 1kg of *Lotus australis*. Aimee delivered the seed up to Seeding Natives at Mt Pleasant.
- 45. **Threat Abatement Works** was undertaken by 'Environmental Weed Control & Revegetation' at Holm Hill, Burra Mines, Mokota CP, Saunders Gorge and Mannum Waterfalls to help protect these grassland sites from weed invasion.
- 46. Promoted the Tiliqua planting event on social media and sent through to our email list.
- 47. Site visit to Tiliqua with Aimee Linke, Kate Graham, Nicola Barnes, Kelly Arbon and Lucy Clive to mark out the planting sites prior to the event. Supported the planting day event at



Figure 5 some of the planting crew at Tiliqua

Tilqua, provided the water trailer and we planted 350 *Lomandra multiflora dura* tubestock across the landscape to increase the diversity and resilience of the property and hopefully improved the habitat for reptiles, invertebrates and ground dwelling birds.

Western Pygmy Possums

48. Aimee – sent out an email update to project participants and included the box monitoring sheet and Rowena’s post with the gecko sharing the possum box.
49. Volunteer Graham Frahn inspected a landholder’s box that is at Kingston on the Murray, Graham also picked up a few more boxes for this property and for another person who is interested in being involved with the project
50. Rowena – picked up some boxes for landholder at Hartley near Callington who has possums on her property.
51. Rowena - entered WPP datasheets from new project participants Ellen and Adam Krahnert from Sedan.
52. Rowena - followed up with Donna Pruse about her WPP in June - no activity.
53. Rowena - shared a post with information about winter habits of WPPs was posted on 16/6/22. And a post about Western Pygmy Possums sharing nesting boxes with Geckos whilst feeding young on 21/6/22.



Figure 6 WPP eat spiders



Figure 7 WPP share boxes with geckos