



Mid Murray Landcare SA
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Activity Update July 2023

This activity update is for the month of July 2023. If you would like to be on our mailing list and receive this free update, please email Aimee Linke at the above email address, or view it on webpage. These projects are from varied sources of funding including Grassroots Grants, Healthy Rivers Grant plus other small grants and contract work.

Meldanda

1. Continued with managing the volunteers, camp bookings, provision of materials and equipment and all necessary administration managing the booking page, cleaning, and maintenance of facilities, trimming trees. Kept neighbors informed of any camp bookings - we had 29 adults and fourteen children camping at Meldanda, and the Cambrai Youth Club used the site for a BBQ.
2. The Director and staff from Scotts Creek Outdoor Centre (Prince Alfred College) visited Meldanda and were really impressed, they are seeking some support and ideas for their property.

Community Nursery

3. Supported twelve landholders or groups with plants, plant selection, projects or weed or other species identification, including a site visit to Punyelroo, and a quarry at Black hill. We also donated plants to Wildwood Park and Yookamurra Sanctuaries.
4. Volunteers have been sowing *Callitris gracilis*, *Eucalyptus porosa* and *Bursaria spinosa* (Christmas Bush) and potting on *Melaleuca lanceolata* and *Acacia argyrophylla*.
5. Sorting out the seed boxes and planted *Microseris lanceolata* that Mark Metcalf donated to us for seed collection.

Committee & other

6. 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.
7. Sent out agenda, minutes, correspondence list, and financial report for the month to the Committee. We held our monthly meeting at the Cambrai Library.
8. Rowena Danks- submitted the final report for the Landcare in the Mallee project 22-23
9. Aimee Linke – submitted final report for Landcare in the Murray project 22-23
10. Letter of Support for Joint NLPAC and MACAI Junior Ranger Program Application.

River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve - Chris Tugwell

11. Don Bursill, Chris Tugwell and Andrew Cool met with Rocky Warren and Trevor Zbierski to view Otto property possible Observatory/Planetarium site; all agree this is an ideal location. Andrew to take all-sky images to confirm.
12. CT meeting with Jake and Jarrod Bielby (Council's new Manager Development and Regulation) to discuss Observatory/Planetarium site and possible funding.
13. Swan Reach Dark Sky mural.
14. Illuminate coming to Mannum (4th to 13th August)
15. CT meeting with Buckford Illumination to discuss demonstration site.
16. CT Churchill Fellowship interview (unsuccessful).

Irongrass Native Grasslands Project – Aimee Linke

17. Rainfall at the Meldanda trial site in July 31mm.
18. Weeded the seed production areas and pulled out the *Austrostipa nodosa* for a landholder that will plant a seed nursery.
19. Volunteers David Bennett, Paul Martin and Cameron Cook have started work on the Seed Production Area to trench and bury the netting that goes around the orchard to help make on going maintenance easier.

Western Pygmy Possums

20. Aimee - went out to a landholder's property on Sleeper track to swap SD card in camera with Helen and Liam Crisp. We captured a video of possums inside the box. We also started a species list for the property, including trying to determine what mallee species the active boxes are on. We saw some great plants including Early Nancy, Lavendar Halgania, Native daisies, Pussetails, Blue Heron's-bill and Mallee copperburr.
21. Dropped SD card off to volunteer Don Lester and collected the ones he has reviewed; we will look at setting up the camera, so it just takes night photos.
22. Made some enquiries with FeralScan to start using and promoting the use of this app as part of the possum project.



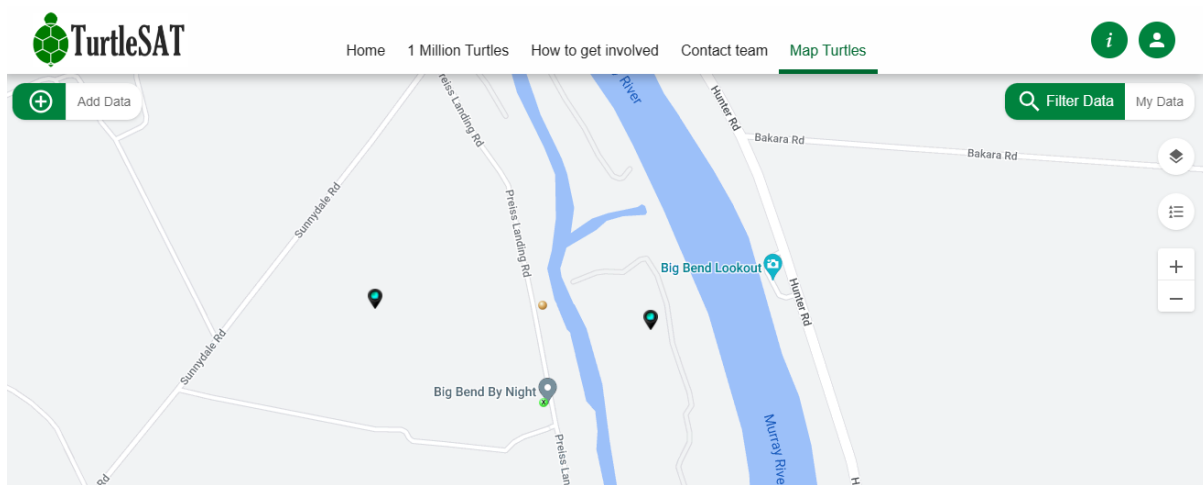
Figure 1 Mallee copperburr, *Sclerolaean parviflora*.



Figure 2 Early Nancy, *Wurmbea dioica*

Turtles

23. Aimee - Logged the turtle nest predation survey onto the TurtleSAT website, the map below shows the two nest surveys we have done at Big Bend/Preiss Landing.



Healthy Rivers – aquatic weeds project. - MRLB Staff (Scott Hutchens)

24. River inspections have continued this month with a stretch from Blanchetown to Swan Reach completed. The post flood weeds in this area seem to be consistent to all other areas of the river flats affected by the flood. The only exception is that Golden Dodder was found on open flats covered with broadleaf weed that are an ideal host for the plant to attach too. Work will have to be concentrated on this area in the upcoming summer season.
25. Board staff have been busy targeting a White Weeping Broom infestation on private land in the Devon Downs area. A select chemical was purchased that showed good results from our foliar spraying trial in the area. Works will continue to reduce the infestation in the area and help landowners contain the spread of this plant.
26. The next focus has been on the Devon Downs/Nildottie Island with inspections and extensive mapping of pest weeds undertaken this month. With the dominance of Wheel Cactus in this area a decision has been made to engage a contractor to undertake pest weed control on the island. Stem injection control method of the infestation of Wheel Cactus will be the focus with opportunistic control of African Boxthorn and Boneseed plants will be foliar sprayed with backpack spray equipment. A purchase and works order have been created for the sum of 10k and SK Bush Care contractors have been engaged to undertake the works required on the Island. With any leftover funds contractors will be directed to private lands to undertake other weed control until funding is completed.
27. This month has also seen over 15 enquires of other weed concerns requiring inspections and advice on new emerging weeds on the flood plains post flood. Identification and loan of equipment e.g., sprayers, dabbers and stem injection kits have been issued this month. Most weeds can be controlled by landowners but some of the bigger jobs have seen board staff spraying with the Landcruiser spray unit to help break the back of infestations that are a bit overwhelming for landholders significantly affected by the

flood. Flood recovery has been in contact and inspections of shack sites such as Marks Landing and several other sites have been undertaken for new weeds. A report has been completed and sent to Tim Wachtel to present at Shack Association meetings. A focus was placed on trying to preserve native plants that have germinated after the floods when thinking about weed control in these areas.

NEW Supporting Biodiversity Across Conservation and Production Lands

A new project has been funded for 23-24 under the grassroots program. Here is a summary of the project. Rowena Danks

28. This project uses the Regent Parrot as an indicator species for improved biodiversity in conservation and production lands in the Riverland and Mallee regions. It supports land managers to improve forage and habitat for the Regent Parrot and other species of birds, insects, and bees.
29. The project addresses biodiversity management in conservation lands through the support of existing Regent Parrot nesting surveys, associated forage plantings and the provision of a native seed source in seed production areas.
30. It addresses biodiversity in productive systems through a forum for growers to learn management tools to take advantage of the integrated pest management and ecosystem services native species can provide them, and support tools to manage the impacts of birds that feed on their crops such as decoy crops. It draws links between pollination requirements and pest management services in production in a region that is home to key species of birds such as the Regent Parrot.
31. The project strengthens important relationships that have been initiated in previous grassroots projects and aims to spark new collaborative partnerships in productive industries for future works in the area of biodiversity management for the benefit of all.

Project activities - July 2023 - Rowena Danks

Support nest survey work on Murbpook.

32. Nature Foundation will be delivering this activity. Initial planning is being done as work will commence in Spring.

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

33. I have begun drafting a communication about Honeybee health and increased pollination. I expect this will go out in August/September.

Identify potential revegetation project for Regent Parrot forage species.

34. Some early scoping of potential sites has been done with more detail to come in August.