



Mid Murray Landcare SA

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Activity Update May 2024

This activity update is for the month of May 2024. 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 our webpage. These projects are from varied sources of funding including the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board's Grassroots Grants, 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, watering, pump operations, weeding and collection from seed production areas, and general maintenance of facilities.
2. Kept neighbors informed of any camp bookings - we had sixteen bookings for May, fifty-three adults and thirty-four children, eight of the bookings were for the astronomy paddock.
3. We had a school group camp at Meldanda for two nights and had the following comment about their stay.

"We loved Meldanda and felt it was an ideal place for our Class 4 school camp. The facilities were ideal, the fire pit was a great focus and we camped close by to be near the toilets. The significant red gums were inspiring all felt it was a calm and loved place.

Many thanks".

4. We saw our local echidna at Meldanda, it was trying to get into the seed production area, it had ruby saltbush seeds stuck on its quills, it was happy exploring Meldanda eating up the ants on the paths.
5. We have also been seeing pretty little birds at Meldanda coming into the bird baths, including some White-naped Honeyeaters (*Melithreptus*

lunatus), Meldanda has a few people who like to camp or visit to see and photograph the birds.



Figure 1 Echidna visiting the SPA.



Figure 2 White-naped Honeyeater.



Figure 3 Volunteers have cleared one of the paths near the frog pond and large campground area.

Community Nursery

6. Supported ten landholders or groups with plants, plant selection, projects, including queries from the Mid Murray Council.
7. Volunteers have been weeding and potting on *Acacia*'s, *Santalum acuminatum* (quandong) and *Senna*'s, sowing *Eucalyptus* species, *Melaleuca*, *Bursaria*, *Allocasuarina* and *Atriplex*, plants have begun to be collected ready for the planting season. Some of the plant orders that

have been collected include Rockford Wines in the Barossa and Costa Brothers Hullers and Shellers (Almonds Swan Reach).

Committee & other

8. 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. Meeting with the bank and committee members to update some of our accounts.
9. Sent out agenda, minutes, correspondence list, and financial report for the month to the Committee. We held our May meeting at the Cambrai Library.
10. Attended Trees for Life online workshop on Native Vegetation Property Planning.
11. Shared two Social Media posts on the Australasian Bat Society Conference on our Landcare page.
12. Attended the field trip organised by the Friends of Private Bushland to the State Herbarium and Seed Conservation Centre, it was amazing to see the work that is done at both places, the important resource it is and the ongoing support that is needed, especially funding.
13. Shared the Mallee Bioblitz 2024 at Yookamurra Sanctuary on our Landcare page.

River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve - Chris Tugwell

14. Torrens University students' presentation of technical requirements and business case for Observatory/Planetarium.
15. Discussions with John George re Costa Brothers lights.
16. Meeting with Peter Buckley and Andy Spivey of Buckford Illuminations re. Creating Dark Sky compliant lighting brochure for Council.
17. Spoke on Buckford Illumination's bus tour of Salisbury Council Dark Sky compliant lights (met with VIPs from SA Power Networks and Dept of Transport).
18. Arranged consultations on Planetarium specifications between Torrens Uni and Martin Lewicki.
19. Carrickalinga has received Dark Sky Community accreditation (first 'community' in Australia).

20. Interview with ABC Radio Adelaide's Nikolai Beilharz on Reserve for 'SA Firsts' segment.
21. Prepared application for ASSA Telescope event at Cambrai Primary School during Science Week (Ken Grant).
22. Council Dark Sky committee meeting to discuss WA trademark issue (follow-up with WA IDA rep, Carol Redford).
23. Don Bursill and Jarrod Bielby followed up installation of touch screen display at Mannum Visitor's Centre.

Feral Scan

24. We had three more goat sightings added to Feral Scan, all in the same area west of Murbko Flat Lagoon, heading towards Morgan, they were contributed by a new landholder and there were approximately 25 goats seen.
25. Site visit to property where goat traps set up to top up the water tank, changed the card on the camera, some of the goats seen on the camera can be seen in photo below.
26. Planned the field day with Landscape Board Officer Rob McGregor, prepared a flyer and started promoting to local landholders. The field day will be held on the 20th of June on private property and will cover regulations for keeping goats as stock, managing feral goats and in field weed control demonstrations.



Figure 4 some of the goats visiting the water trough on private land.

Irongrass Native Grasslands Project

27. Aimee and volunteers have collected Berry saltbush and native grasses.
28. Aimee and volunteers have been cleaning, weighing and storing the collected seed.
29. Have been discussing with some landholders the idea of setting up some exclosures to keep out grazing on some native grassland areas and they have agreed to take part in the trials.
30. Have been getting some prices on fencing materials and we will need to make the fences wombat proof as well, which could be a challenge.
31. Kate Graham and Aimee Linke will go out in second week of June to mark the trial sites in preparation for the fencing.
32. This Irongrass Native Grasslands Project, funded by Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board, supported the watering of the Irongrass Plantings at the Nature Foundation owned Tiliqua Nature Reserve. Aimee met eight Nature Foundation volunteers on site to water 700 Irongrass (*Lomandra multiflora* ssp. *dura* and *Lomandra densiflora*), that were in dire need of some water, due to the extremely dry season we have been experiencing. All the plants are in fenced in exclosures to protect them from grazing and have been marked with pin markers, this made it easy to find them in the long grass. The weather was fantastic, and it was so nice to meet some lovely people who are keen to get out and volunteer their time to help environmental projects like this one.
33. Shared a social media post on the watering day at Tiliqua on our Landcare page.



Figure 5 Watering the *Lomandra* plantings at Tiliqua with Nature Foundation volunteers.

Supporting Biodiversity Across Conservation and Production Lands - Rowena Danks.

Maintain 1 partnership with Industry where Regent Parrot management is crucial to crop management.

34. Discussions with producers to assist in the development of the forum. And follow up conversations to encourage people to attend the forum

Host 1 forum to support bee and bird management in productive systems.

35. The forum will be held on June 18th at Swan Reach. See details below.
Please share through your networks.

Bookings can be made at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/pollination-and-integrated-pest-management-in-horticulture-free-forum-tickets-917084804337>



Figure 6 Forum flyer

Grassroots Grant Application

36. Our submission for Grassroots Grant funding for our project **Supporting Biodiversity Across Conservation and Production Lands** was approved for the 24-25 year.

Project description

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.

The project addresses biodiversity management in conservation lands through EDNA analysis of scat samples collected during the 2024 Regent Parrot nesting survey at multiple sites throughout the species range in South Australia. This will provide valuable insights into potential differences in diet between nests and colonies, which may underpin the reproductive success of those nests and colonies. These results will inform future revegetation works on properties in the region, ensuring the right species are planted to better support conservation of the species.

It addresses biodiversity in productive systems through collaborating with growers to develop new projects that 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.

It demonstrates and monitors the use of water troughs specifically designed for native birds in productive systems to build knowledge amongst growers of how water can be used in these productive systems.

It supports volunteers who work to support conservation of Malleefowl, Regent Parrot and other native species that rely on habitat along and north of the Murray River in the Living Landscapes Project area. And it takes a key step in the ongoing development of volunteer skills and exposure to relevant work in similar ecosystems across Australia. 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.