



Mid Murray Landcare SA

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Activity Update February 2025

This activity update is for the month of February 2025. 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 and contract work.

Support the objectives of Mid Murray Landcare SA.

1. 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.
2. Sent out monthly activity update, agenda, minutes, correspondence list, and financial report for the month to the Committee.
3. . We held our monthly committee meeting at the Cambrai Community Library.

Support volunteer activities at the Cambrai Community Nursery, provide support to landholders, groups, and schools with land management projects.

4. Provided support to seven landholders or groups with site visits or project support or plant identification including three site visits.
5. Volunteers have been potting on *Eremophila* cuttings, *Eucalyptus* species, lilies, daisies, and native grasses.
6. Watered the Japanese garden at the school, re-staked plants and cut seeding heads off the fountain grass.
7. Prepared a large native grass order for Rowena Danks for a Second Nature Conservancy Project.
8. Volunteers cleaned and sowed *Acacia salicina* we collected from Meldanda, we put seed bags on them before Christmas.



Figure 1 *Acacia salicina* seed.



Figure 2 seed bags on *Acacia salicina*.

9. Scott's Creek PAC visit, spoke with three educators from PAC, MRLB Education Officers Rosheen and Alice also attended, we did the mallee walk and pointed out things of interest they could share with the students. Left some bushtucker plants with them. They are very interested in doing some bat monitoring, making possum boxes and getting some help with their bushtucker garden.
10. Site visit with Kitty Schiansky (HELP Project) to look at erosion issues and ideas for revegetation, we put aside forty plants for the project.



Figure 3 plants for HELP project.



Figure 4 Kitty watering Lomandra.

Manage Meldanda on behalf of the Cambrai Primary School Governing Council

11. Continued with managing the volunteers, camp bookings, provision of materials and equipment and all necessary administration managing the booking page, cleaning, watered, ant control.
12. Camp bookings - we had twenty-seven camp nights for February, fifty-four adults and seven children, with eleven of those booking the Astronomy Paddock.
13. Started working with a signwriter to have a new sign to help orientate campers at Meldanda when they arrive.
14. Met onsite with Sarah Richards from Cambrai PS and Barossa Carpet Court to get a quote for lino and carpet tiles to be installed in the recreation hall.

Support the River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve Committee and Mid Murray Council with projects to maintain dark sky accreditation and education on the impacts of light pollution. Chris Tugwell

15. Discussions with Council Dark Sky committee re replacement streetlights.
16. Concerns that streetlights are not compliant.
17. Communications with DST re container and equipment donation.
18. Dark Sky Reserve featured at Caravan & Camping Show; thanks for generous support and Bill Nehmy, Kelly Kuhn, and Simone Bailey for giving their time.
19. Catch-up with Peter Buckley (Buckford Illumination).

Support Citizen Science projects in the region to engage landholders and volunteers in Water Watch activities, Turtle Conservation and Feral Goat projects.

20. There were twenty sightings submitted to FeralScan for February with approximate 160 goats seen near Morgan, Scott's Creek, Taylorville and Calperum from six observers, it was also reported that seven were shot and 190 were removed for commercial use.
21. Landholder near Bowhill reported that out of his eight boxes all but one has possum activity, one was using the spider egg sacks to line the

nest, and the one that did not have possums had a bird's nest in it, we assume it is a pardalote.

22. Met with Don Lester to discuss the potential of doing some more possum box workshops.
23. Picked up bat detectors and data sheets for Marne Saunders bat project to lend to landholders.

Supporting Biodiversity Across Conservation and Production Lands – Rowena Danks

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

24. Partnerships have been maintained to support Regent Parrot management in Almond Orchards and to understand where support can be provided to support best outcomes at the interface between conservation and production.

Report on EDNA work on Murbpook

25. We expect results back from the EDNA work in March/April.

Encourage mallee community to participate in recording sightings of Regent Parrots in the mallee using the 'Poly Tell Us' App. Encourage mallee community to participate in recording sightings of Regent Parrot habitat plants across mallee.

26. To help raise awareness and encourage the mallee and Riverland community to use the Poly Tell Us app to report sighting of the Regent Parrot, vulnerable in South Australia, we are leveraging the power of social media. Our campaign highlights a detailed description of the species, its threatened status, and guidance on reporting sightings using the Poly Tell Us App. It features a map showcasing current sightings in the Mallee and Riverland regions. By sharing this content across the Regent Parrot

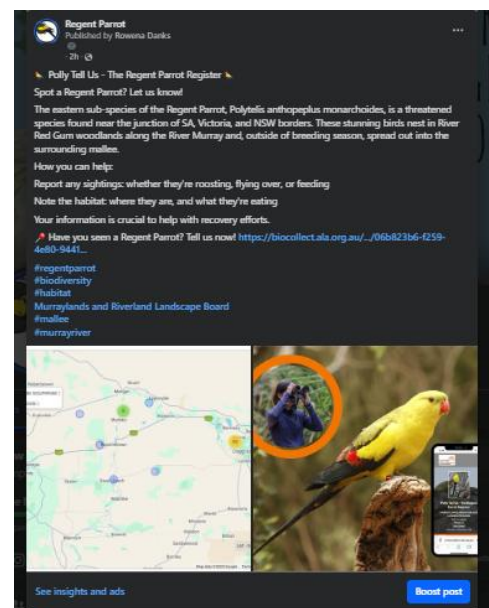


Figure 5 promoting Poly Tell Us app on the Regent Parrot Facebook page.

page and relevant interest groups, we ensured widespread visibility and engagement. Additionally, this initiative reached more individuals through the Mid Murray Landcare Facebook Group, further encouraging public participation in conservation efforts and the Polly Tell Us app.

27. We have had several responses to this post with sightings to record in the Polly Tell Us app.

Maintain 2 x Seed Production Areas to support establishment and harvest of seed producing plants that contribute to the establishment of habitat for priority species in the Murray Mallee, Mid Murray, and Pastoral areas.

28. At the Whytes Well Seed Production Area, the netting was removed from the *Billardiera cymosa* plants and will remain off until the next seeding season. Alongside this, weeding and the storage of netting were undertaken. Additionally, planning for maintenance is now in progress, with considerations being made regarding the potential need for upgrading or removing the weed mat in the near future.



Figure 6 removing the netting.



Figure 7 collecting the seed.

Harvest seed at two seed production areas as available.

29. *Billardiera cymosa* seed was collected at Whytes Well SPA. The harvested seeds were carefully gathered, cleaned, and stored to ensure their viability for future planting. These seeds will be sent off for processing at Blackwood Seeds.

Link local producers (honey and cropping/grazing) to National programs that support honeybee health or increased production.

30. In the latest Pollinator Update, we have compiled essential information to support the SA Murray Mallee, Mid Murray, and Riverland areas. The update emphasizes preparedness for the Varroa mite, a significant threat to pollinators. A new team of Varroa Development Officers at PIRSA is now available to provide guidance, share crucial information, and conduct workshops. These workshops, such as the free session in Riverland on 22nd February 2025, cover Varroa mite impacts, management, and treatment strategies.
31. Additionally, the update highlights the launch of the Australian Colony Loss Survey, a national effort to collect data on beekeeping practices and the impact of the Varroa mite. This survey aims to build a long-term dataset to support industry and government actions in safeguarding pollinators.
32. The update also delves into the importance of bee hotels, with insights from Clancy Lester, who has been actively building and promoting bee hotels to support native bees. It includes practical tips and resources from Clancy on constructing bee hotels using locally sourced materials and creating pollinator-friendly environments.
33. The Update was sent to eighty-three email contacts and shared on social media.

Identify potential awareness raising / engagement opportunities for pollinators in production.

34. I have been working with the new Varroa Development Team at PIRSA to support the linkages of the Officers with the various groups and individuals that could benefit from this program. The team is aiming to present to the community, industry, and departments responsible for honey-bee management such as Parks and Wildlife so that they can be best prepared for varroa incursion into South Australia.

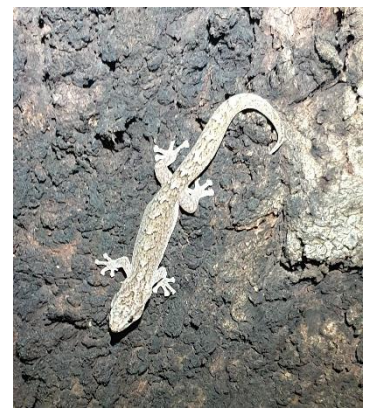
Murray Darling Carpet Python Project – Aimee Linke.

35. We did another night search at Yookamurra with Aly Ross, Zoe Linke, Rosheen Blumson, Alice Woodward, and Harrison Kent. We saw Bilby's, which was very exciting seeing them in natural habitat, makes you realise the impact we have had on this country.

36. Stayed at Paringa CP for a couple of nights and did some Python surveys at Martin's Bend with five RMAC Rangers and Harrison Kent, we saw no pythons but plenty of brushtail possums and a frog and some geckos.
37. We did a Habitat assessment of a landholder's property near Katarapko where a previous python had been sighted in a shed. We also came back the following morning with the RMAC rangers to search for the python.
38. We did a night survey at Pike CP where a landholder has previously sighted a python at their pump, we did not see any pythons but saw some geckos, a scorpion and some dug up turtle nests.



Figure 8 Scorpion.



Figures 9 and 10 Gecko species

39. Stayed a night at Berri and did several habitat assessments where there have been previous sightings including SA Water Lock 4 and Lock 6, Chowilla Floodplain and Linder Landing.
40. Harrison and Aimee also did a night search at Linder Landing.



Figure 11 Harrison searching at night.



Figure 12 python seen at Linder Landing photo courtesy Linder.

Native Grasslands Project 2023-2026 – Aimee Linke

41. Dropped the SD cards off to volunteer Bob White to review the photos for me. Bob provided a summary of the images, there are four cameras set up, the most active camera is camera 4, the one set up closest to Pine Hine Rd on the Stiff Stay enclosure which recorded 1917 images of birds, foxes, rabbits, hares, kangaroos and sheep. The plain wire area from camera one that allows kangaroos to push in recorded a kangaroo in there and captured a great shot of some eagles.



Figure 13 photo of an eagle at trial site.



Figure 14 Kangaroo in trial site, plain wire enclosure.

42. Seed Production Area - seed collection of *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* with volunteers Cryss and Mick.
43. Have been having issues with ants in the orchard, which Sheralee has been trying to control. The ants have been preventing us accessing the area because of safety concerns.
44. The dry conditions, even though we water the SPA, production of seed and plant survival has been impacted.