

NRM Notes

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Vertebrate Pest Research Unit, Orange NSW 2800

www.invasiveanimals.com



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ABARES



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Invasive Animals CRC

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Our June edition of NRM Notes brings you updates on a range of pest projects from around the country. We're excited to hear that many of you are working together to reduce the impacts of pests in your area, and congratulate those of you who have recently secured funding. Keep sharing your stories with us! *Thanks for your support, Jessica & Annette.*

NRM team builds knowledge at National conference

The Invasive Animals CRC went along to the 4th National NRM Knowledge Conference held in Adelaide recently, and gained some new insight into the challenges facing Australia's on-ground practitioners and regional NRM staff.

We enjoyed meeting so many of you who plan, coordinate or participate in pest animal projects - large and small - across a range of different landscapes. It was great to chat with Simon Conaty from Torres Strait Regional Authority, Peter Clifton—NT Regional Landcare Facilitator, Jayne Thorpe from Condamine Alliance, Michael Nash from Terrain NRM, Lisa Stevens from SA Arid Lands NRM, John Silver from Rangelands WA and many more of you who dropped by our exhibition booth during the conference.

If you weren't able to be there, don't worry - you can check out some of the presentations on the NRM Conference website (see link below).



<http://www.aomevents.com/NRM2012/Presentations>

Contact: Annette Brown, Project Officer - IA CRC, P: (02) 6391 3917



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The Clarence Valley common Indian Myna control project

This project, run by Clarence Valley Conservation in Action (CVCIA) Landcare group, is funded by the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country grants program with further assistance from the Clarence Valley Council. The group has been very busy this year running educational stalls at many local markets and the Maclean and Grafton Shows (in conjunction with the Clarence Valley weeds team) as well as presentations to interested groups.

There are now several CO² euthanasing stations set up, with more in the pipeline so interested trappers who are uncomfortable with euthanasia can be catered for. Bird handling is no longer necessary due to the CVCIA's re-designed traps, which allow for bird transfer cages similar to those used by the Mid North Coast group.

The CVCIA's trap building program is in full swing with Nortec Employment & Training Ltd as well as two CVCIA volunteers producing quality, ready to use traps. There are over 80 traps in the field and more ready to go as new trappers are found.

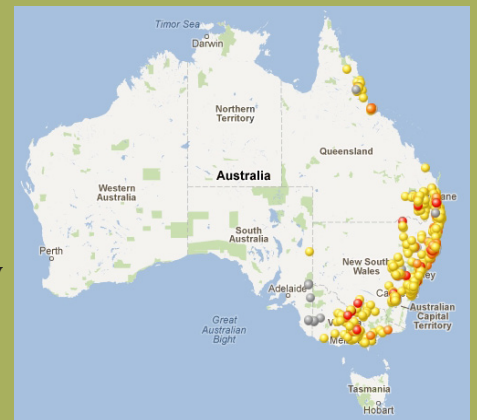
The project tally is now over 2250 so that means there are now a lot more nest sites available for our native birds.



MynaScan Update

Myna birds are a growing problem throughout much of eastern Australia. The MynaScan website (part of FeralScan) now contains over 3600 sighting records of myna birds, as well as critical evidence of the damage mynas are causing, and current control activities by communities and local government. This evidence is helping people to control this pest species. Anyone can contribute data in MynaScan.

Some local government areas and Catchment Management Authorities have recently received MynaScan information.



Drop into your local government or CMA office or simply visit the website for further information:

www.feralscan.org.au/mynascan

Mobile MynaScan

MynaScan will soon be available in a mobile phone friendly version, allowing anyone to record sightings of myna birds and mark their exact location using their mobile phone.

Contact: Kevin or Laura Noble, CVCIA Myna Coordinators
P: (02) 6649 4712 | E: mynas@cvcia.org.au

Contact: Peter West, Invasive Animals CRC
P: (02) 6391 3887 | E: peter.west@dpi.nsw.gov.au





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Central West CMA and Central West LHPA collaborate to control feral pigs

Landholders north of Coonamble in the Wingadee and Nedgera wetlands have been carrying out a large pig control program with assistance from the Central West Livestock Health and Pest Authority (CW LHPA) and the Central West Catchment Management Authority (CW CMA). Work in these areas started in June 2011 after reports of extreme losses in lambing percentages on scanned ewes and increasing amounts of crop damage, as well as higher than usual visual reports of pig numbers. These wetland areas also have significant native flora and fauna that need to be protected.

Two stakeholder meetings were held to discuss the most suitable control methods. Farmers agreed that an integrated approach was needed, using a number of different control methods in combination throughout the year. Landholders were supplied with 40 field mesh traps, and have caught on average 65 pigs/month. In addition to trapping, they have been poisoning with 1080, using 2480 kg of grain across the 14 properties. Remote cameras have also been used to determine the number of pigs feeding on bait and to determine the most effective time to bait or set traps.

Landholders at the meetings also identified that they would like to carry out aerial shooting with the help of the CW LHPA. An aerial shoot was carried out in April 2012 - fully funded by the landholders. Two more aerial shoots are due to take place in January and late autumn 2013. Landholders will fund 50% of these shoots in conjunction with the funding from the CW CMA.

Contact: Emily Messner, CW LHPA Ranger, P: 0428 638 617
Tim Nalder, CW CMA, P: 0438 224 536



Catchment Management Authority
Central West



Above: Feral pig caught in a trap. Image: Tim Nalder

Queensland Pest Animal Symposium 2012

The Queensland Pest Animal Symposium 2012, will be held from 30 July - 2 August 2012 at the Sunshine Coast Function Centre, Caloundra, Queensland.

The Symposium program will consist of presentations on community initiatives, policy matters, new innovations, the latest research and techniques.

The aim of the Symposium is to bring people involved in pest animal management together from all parts of Queensland and throughout Australia to network with other like-minded people, including local government pest officers, landowners, contractors, community project officers, government agency staff, regional NRM officers, researchers and students involved in pest management. We'll see you there!



Queensland Pest Animal Symposium

30 July - 2 August 2012

www.pestanimalsymposium.com.au

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South West NRM assist with regional feral pig control

South West NRM (Qld) are preparing to conduct an aerial feral pig shoot on 30 km of a major riparian zone, adjacent to the Currawinya National Park and High Ecological Value Aquatic Ecosystems of the Paroo river. The shoot will be carried out by local Qld DAFF officer Murray Wingett, with the services of Thargomindah-based helicopter pilot Simon Cobb.

High rainfall and extensive major flooding across the south west has seen all feral animal numbers escalate to epidemic proportions. Aquatic ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to disturbance as pigs seek the tender shoots of tubers and plants on the riparian zone, destroying the delicate shoreline habitats and disturbing nesting birds. Landholders are reporting that large pigs are forcing holes through the Wild Dog Barrier Fence, allowing dogs to move into the protected area and making their jobs more difficult as they struggle to repair damage caused by extensive flooding.

East and south of the Currawinya National Park, in the extensive lake systems within the floodout of the Cuttaburra, reports indicate that disturbance to the shore line from large pig numbers is at unprecedented levels. The timing of the shoot has been set to follow the 1080 baiting programs of the Paroo and Bulloo Shires, and Currawinya NP are conducting a shoot across the park later in the month.

Contact: South West NRM
P: (07) 4656 8526 | E: information@swnrm.org.au



Red Card for red fox in Wheatbelt NRM

The Red Card for the Red Fox program aims to coordinate community action for better control of feral foxes, cats and rabbits, and has been underway across the central Wheatbelt region, WA, in recent months.

The feral pest shoot, organised by the Kellerberrin Shire, was held over two weekends in March and April. Wheatbelt NRM's Regional Landcare Facilitator Mick Davis said eight teams competed from around Kellerberrin district. Wheatbelt NRM sponsored a Highest Points Trophy and a community BBQ as part of the Caring for Our Country Program. A combined effort of 328 foxes, along with 22 cats and 72 rabbits were culled. The winning team was North Kellerberrin, who tallied 61 foxes and four cats. Landholder Ben Chandler from South Doodlakine, who was part of the winning team, said the event helped get more people involved. "It makes it easy, usually if you go out fox shooting it's only a couple of hours by yourself. But when you have an event like the Red Card program, it gives you a motivation to all get together".

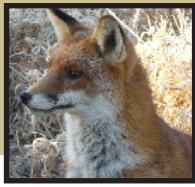
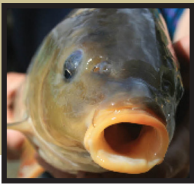
These events, in conjunction with coordinated baiting activities, help to promote wide participation in fox control across the agricultural landscape and generate community ownership of pest control programs in the Wheatbelt NRM.



Contact: Mick Davis, Regional Landcare Facilitator
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wheatbelt
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AUSTRALASIAN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY



Win your way to AWMS 2012 Conference!

The Australasian Wildlife Management Society (AWMS) is holding its 25th Annual Conference in Adelaide, South Australia on 27th—29th November and they are offering YOU a chance to be there, expenses paid!

This year, the AWMS has established a Practitioner's Award up to the value of \$2500 for a field practitioner or practitioner group demonstrating best practice in scientific wildlife management in the Australasian region. Applicants must be able to demonstrate excellence in their field and will be given a great opportunity to share their achievements via a presentation at the conference.

The Award includes:

- Three years free membership to AWMS
- Free registration to the conference - including the conference dinner and a presentation time slot
- Travel costs up to \$600
- A framed certificate from the AWMS
- PLUS... a \$1000 cash prize!

What a fantastic opportunity for you or one of your regional, on-ground staff to gain some recognition and mix it with some of Australasia's most renowned wildlife scientists! The AWMS Annual Conference is a great event, so we encourage everyone who's eligible to put together a short, one page summary of your outstanding achievements and send it in. Let's get behind our practitioners and this fantastic Award. See the website for more details: <http://www.onqconferences.com.au/events/awms2012/index.html>

Contact: AWMS President, Peter Fleming, (02) 6391 3806 or peter.fleming@dpi.nsw.gov.au
Applications close August 31st, 2012.

Landcare Week 2012

3rd - 9th September



This year's **National Landcare Conference** will be held 3 - 5 September 2012 at the Convention and Exhibition Centre in Sydney, during Landcare Week. The conference theme is "*Landcare - the future is in our hands*" and it will be a great opportunity to bring together people from all NRM sectors, including Landcarers and community groups, land managers, farmers, industry, government agencies and regional NRM practitioners.

For more information and to register, go to <http://www.daff.gov.au/landcareconference>

Research in review . . .

This section of NRM Notes is dedicated to the scientific papers that have recently been published and don't readily find their way out to on-ground managers and members of NRM agencies. Below is a summary of two recent journal publications regarding pest animal management.

Good dog! Using livestock guardian dogs to protect livestock from predators in Australia's extensive grazing systems.

Linda van Bommel and Chris N. Johnson

From: *Wildlife Research* (2012), 39 (3), 220-229.

Journal homepage: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/paper/WR11135>

Journal abstract: Wild predators are a serious threat to livestock in Australia. Livestock guardian dogs (LGDs) may be able to reduce or eliminate predation, but their effectiveness in Australian grazing systems has not been systematically evaluated. We aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of LGDs as currently used in Australia and determine the factors influencing effectiveness, in particular in relation to scale of management. We also documented how LGDs are managed in Australia, evaluated their cost effectiveness, and identified factors that influence the number of dogs required in different property situations. We conducted a telephone survey of 150 livestock producers with LGDs in Australia, including all livestock types and property situations, in all States.

Effectiveness was apparently high: 65.7% of respondents reported that predation ceased after obtaining LGDs, and a further 30.2% reported a decrease of predation. The cost of obtaining a LGD is returned within 1-3 years after the dog starts working. The number of dogs required for a property mainly depends on the number of livestock needing protection, and the main type of predator in the area. Provided a sufficient number of LGDs are used, they can be as effective in protecting livestock from predators in Australia when ranging freely on large properties with large numbers of livestock as they are in small-scale farming systems. LGDs can provide a cost-effective alternative to conventional predator control methods in Australia's extensive grazing enterprises, potentially reducing or eliminating the need for other forms of control.

Technical Note: A Permanent Security Post for Camera Trapping

Paul Meek, Guy Ballard and Peter Fleming

From: *Australian Mammalogy* (2012), Just Accepted, 15 June 2012

Journal homepage: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/256.htm>

Journal abstract: As the use of camera traps in wildlife management in Australia rapidly increases, government agencies, private enterprises, Universities and individuals are investing considerable amounts of money in camera trap technology for research, monitoring and recreation. The use of camera traps as an alternative method to sand padding (foot print detection) for fauna surveys has been highlighted, both for potential cost savings and higher quality data, albeit despite the absence of rigorous comparisons. In some circumstances Camera trapping commonly involves placing camera traps need to be placed along vehicle tracks or in obvious locations to detect animal activity. Consequently, units are frequently highly visible and therefore easily located by would-be thieves. In our experience, common security devices such as locking cables have proven to be insufficient barriers to theft, or interference with camera traps. Such thefts and data loss are ongoing risks that, when realised, can have substantial impacts on project budgets and research outcomes. This note describes a field tested security post design that increases security for both camera traps and data, whilst also offering a means of standardising placement.

If you would like a copy of these scientific papers in full, please don't hesitate to contact us at: jessica.marsh@dpi.nsw.gov.au or annette.brown@dpi.nsw.gov.au and we can arrange to send you a copy.

BY ORDER OF THE
INVASIVE ANIMALS CRC

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www.invasiveanimals.com/feral-photos