

LAND TALK

Newsletter of the 'Centralian Land Management Association' (CLMA)

Greetings everyone,

By the time you get this, Andrea & Kurt will have headed off on a 6 month trip around Australia... lucky buggers! Jo Rodney will be returning from Canada at the end of the month to take over the co-ordinator role while Andrea is away. If you have any enquiries about CLMA business or project ideas, contact Jo or Dee at the office. Andrea & Kurt will be back early 2006.

Thanks to everyone who pulled out the cheque book recently and renewed their membership. For those of you who haven't, it's not too late! Membership is \$330 (incl. GST), which gives you access to a huge range of services and funding opportunities.

Cheers, Dee

ERLDUNDA KILL THE WEEDS AND GET NEW TREES

Thanks to some assistance from Envirofunds, Erldunda Station has recently knocked out the old Athel Pines that were planted at the homestead for shade many years ago. The Kilgariffs have replaced the Athels with local natives including gums and kurrajongs.

Brian & Chris from the Government Weeds Branch helped to get rid of the old trees. The new trees are growing really well - the biggest challenge will be keeping an eye on the athel suckers.

The Kilgariff's decision to get rid of Athel Pines from the homestead means that there is less chance for Athel Pine to reinfest parts of the Finke that have been successfully cleaned. If you are interested in replacing weed shade trees with natives on your place, give us a ring at CLMA.

Rocky the boxer helping Cameron to plant trees.



DICK AND ANN CADZOW NOMINATED FOR LANDCARE AWARD

The CLMA has nominated Dick and Ann Cadzow for a Landcare Award. The awards aim to recognize outstanding achievements in landcare.

After buying Mt Riddock in 1986, the Cadzows employed a person full time for 18 months to do rabbit ripping and soil works. They've eradicated rabbits on the station, culled more than 1,000 feral horses and have built numerous ponding banks. They have also implemented a grazing regime which allows regular paddock spelling. These photos show some successful soil rehab work done at Mt Riddock.



JOINT MEETING AT OLD MAN PLAINS

On the 3rd of June, the CLMA shared a meeting with ASPIAC & the NTCA out at Old Man Plains (the part of Owen Springs that is owned by the NT Government). Topics covered included drought policy, NLIS advances, grazing trials, dingo baiting, the CLMA 'dozer and weed funding. Thanks to everyone who made an effort to attend, and a special thanks to the crew at DBIRD for the catering and setting up such a great spot. It was a great day, though we were only sorry not to see more members.



CLMA president Jim Napier addresses the crowd at Old Man Plains. Photo: Barry Skipsey.

ONGOING COORDINATOR FUNDING IN DOUBT

At the Old Man Plains meeting, members voiced concerns at the CLMA Coordinator position not being funded beyond December 2005. Although we have been assured by members of the NT Landcare Council not to worry, we still need to be prepared to find alternative ways to continue funding a coordinator position into the future!!! Andrea & Dee attended a forum in Alice Springs on the 15th of June to discuss the availability of funding to community groups for environmental works under the new Natural Heritage Trust Program (NHTII). Part of the roll-out of the new system of funding will not "straight fund" coordinators in the Northern Territory. To fund this position, we will have to apply for separate programs (e.g. a project on weeds, and write in a co-ordination component as a proportion of these funds.) This is a big blow to the CLMA, as we've been very productive for the past couple of years whilst we've had secure funding.

If you as members would like to write a letter of support for continuing funding, please contact us at the CLMA office. Please remember that **this is your group**, and ultimately it's your decisions that drive the direction of CLMA into the future. Your input is essential!



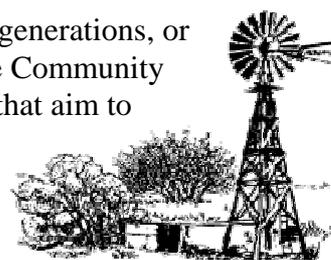
EMS PROJECT UPDATE - FIRE MANAGEMENT

In this continuing series, some of the EMS participants have recorded the ways that they try to manage wild fires and fires for management. Although most people don't have any fuel to burn right now, have a read and see whether you agree or disagree with the opinions below. Do you have your own views? Let us know!

Agree	Disagree	
		Put in good firebreaks rather than "chasing" fires.
		Light backburns on cooler winter nights to maintain control of them.
		Hotspot faxes help you to decide whether to take action.
		Hotspot faxes are useful for prioritising activity when you have multiple fires.
		Put in firebreaks around essential infrastructure such as the homestead.
		It is probably more economic to undertake regular fire management rather than just dealing with big fires when they come.
		Fire planning has to be a cooperative effort by all neighbours. There probably needs to be a regional fire plan that includes all land holders (indigenous, roads department) not just pastoralists.
		Scrubby country requires periodic burning to thin it out.
		Fire is a good tool for thinning scrub. Make use of the fuel before the scrub gets too thick.
		Light fires to clear out woody weeds and scrub and to generate pasture regrowth.
		Burn early (two weeks after rain) to allow pasture growth while there is still moisture in the ground.
		Fires put the nutrients from dry grass back into the soil.
		In terms of pasture management after fire, you need two really good rains soon after each other to get growth. Woody weeds then come up and the country needs to be burnt again before good pasture comes back again.
		Fires clear up the scrub and move the vermin on.

GOT A GOOD WATER IDEA?

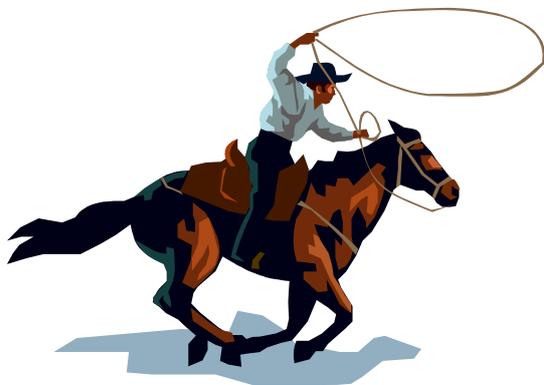
Have you considered fencing some wetland areas to protect them for future generations, or do you have an idea that would save water at your bores? If you do, then the Community Water Fund could be for you. The fund provides up to \$50,000 for projects that aim to protect wetland areas or for water efficiency. The website is www.communitywatergrants.gov.au and if you need a hand with the application, give Peter Barker a call at Greening Australia on 8953 2882.



LAKE EYRE BASIN NEWS

Andrea represented CLMA members at the recent meeting of the Lake Eyre Basin Community Advisory Committee in Innamincka. Part of the meeting agenda was a visit to Innamincka station managed by Maree & Graham Morton. Innamincka station is situated on the Cooper Creek, and many producers in the region are affected by the quality of overland water flows that come from the channel country in Queensland. Some of the most productive country in North eastern SA is on the floodout of the Cooper & Diamantina which go on to flow into Lake Eyre.

It was great to share stories with industry people from South Australia and Queensland, and despite our geographical differences there are a lot of issues that we share in common. Feral animals (including pigs and camels) and weeds, government legislation and grazing management are major issues affecting our pastoral neighbours interstate. Representatives and community groups from the Georgina region (to the west and downstream of the Bunday & Sandover region) are interested in working with us in the future to secure funds to help with weed and feral management.



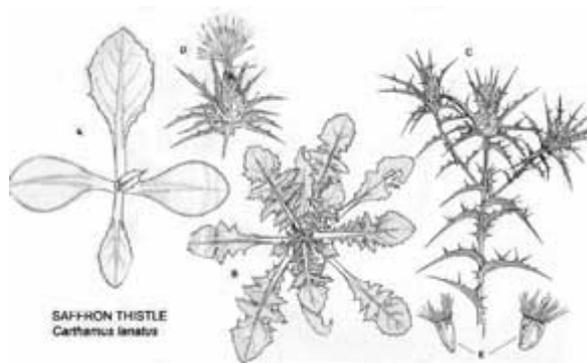
BOOK REVIEW

Pads, tracks and waters. South Australia's pastoral stock routes. By Leith Yelland (2002).
Published by the Outback Areas Community Development Trust.

A good background and history of the pastoral developments and pioneering families of the northern rangelands in South Australia. Easy to read, good photos and anecdotes. Give us a call if you'd like to know where to get a copy.

WEED WATCH

IT'S SAFFRON THISTLE SEASON



This noxious weed is found on roadsides after autumn or winter rains. It has been recorded in Alice Springs and south along the rail corridor, the Stuart Highway, the Lasseter Highway, the Mulga Park road and the Kulgera to Finke road.

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

- It has no value as a pasture plant.
- It competes with pasture plants.
- The spines injure the mouths, eyes and hooves of stock.
- The seed can last 3-10 years.
- Seed is dispersed by wind, water, animals and vehicles (e.g. graders).

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

- It starts out as a green, flat plant in autumn/winter (called a rosette).
- It grows to about 1m high over spring.
- It has spiny leaves when mature.
- It has yellow flowers and hairy stems.
- It dries off after seeding.
- It has a single taproot.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- It is best to chip it out with a hoe when small.
- If it is a very big patch, ring DIPE Weeds Branch for herbicide advice.
- Get on to it before it flowers.
- If it has set seed or is dried off, cut the plants at ground level and burn them.
- Note the location of the plants so you can check after future autumn rains (the seed can last 3-10 years in the soil).

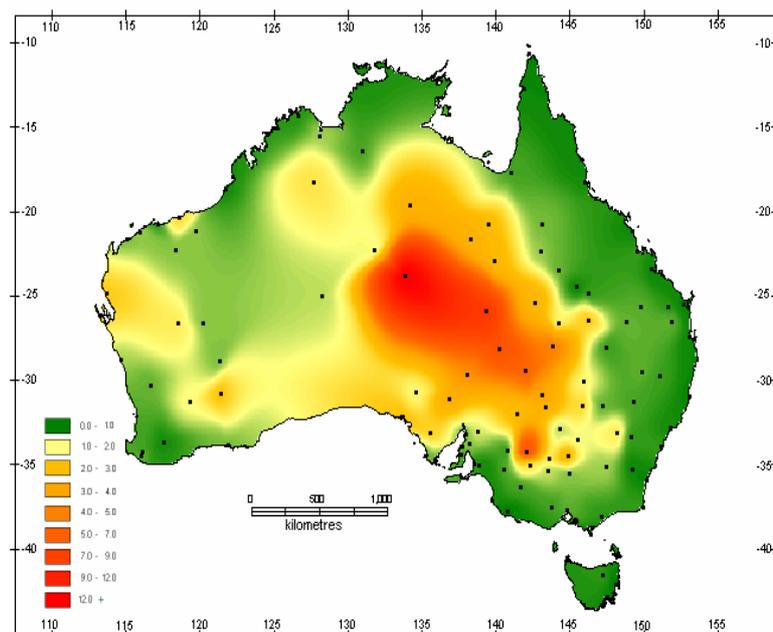
DustWatch – More Than Just Dust in Your Eyes

Australian dust can contain up to 35% organic material. Incredible considering that, on average, Australian soils have an organic component of less than 1%! How can this be? When the wind picks up, the larger soil particles begin to roll, bounce or hop across the ground. The impact of these grains on the soil initiates movement of other finer particles of soil and organic material which are carried higher into the airstream. The smaller the particles the higher and further they travel.

Researchers at Griffith University have been using Bureau of Meteorology data to understand how different areas of the continent are susceptible to wind erosion. The Dust Storm Index (DSI) map below highlights the dusty hotspots but the distribution of sites is very patchy and quite poorly represented in the arid regions.

In an attempt to address this, *DustWatch*, an Australia-wide network of volunteer observers has been set up to improve the understanding of wind erosion. Being a *DustWatcher* is as simple as jotting down a few observations, such as wind direction, wind speed, visibility, location etc and sending in the results.

To become a *DustWatcher* or for more information phone Craig Strong 07 3875 3509 or see www.griffith.edu.au/dustwatch.



Dust Storm Index map (DSI) 1960 to 2004. The dark area near central Australia is an area with the highest rates of wind erosion activity. Black dots indicate the long-term Bureau of Meteorology sites that have a continuous record back to 1960.

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Have you got something you'd like to share with other people in the region relating to managing country, or maybe something you'd like to see in the next edition? LandTalk is inviting you to contribute a piece or article (to be published at discretion of the Editor!).

Send in your ideas by email (clma@clma.com.au), fax (08 89523824) or post (PO Box 2534, Alice Springs) before the end of August.



COMING EVENTS:**HART'S RANGE RACES & SPORTS
WEEKEND 30TH July – 1ST August.**

Contact Liz Bird, Indiana 8956 9779.



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For info about EMS, & to contact Dionne
For enquiries about Grazing Land Management, & to contact Jo

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jo@aglingo.com

WELCOME TO:

- ⇒ Jo and Paul Hill at Manners Creek.
- ⇒ Sonny Roy Driver – a new bub for John & Amber at Elkedra.
- ⇒ Another baby boy for Bill & Tracey Hayes at Deep Well.

If you know of any new additions or other news – let us know!