

Welcome to the Autumn issue of the Early Invader Update

New and improved WESI tools

It is with great pleasure and excitement that the WESI Project team can now introduce to you the “Early Invader Manual!”

An informative summary of the six WESI guides, the “Early Invader Manual” is a tool that will assist public land and biodiversity managers with management of early invader weeds.

All the key steps and templates are now in the one document, available as a printed copy (for Victorian residents only) by [registering for a ticket via eventbrite](#) or as a PDF on the [DELWP external website](#) and STAR (DELWP/PV staff only).

The original set of six guides published in 2016 has been updated as a 2nd edition and provides more detail to support the manual if needed. The set is available as PDF document online via the [Early Invaders](#) page on the DELWP external website and STAR (DELWP/PV staff only).

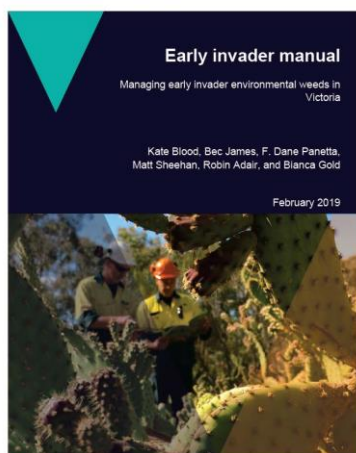


Figure 1: The new ‘Early Invader Manual’

Credit: DELWP

Weed Spotters

In February the WESI Project was lucky enough to have Agriculture Victoria Biosecurity deliver [Weed Spotter](#) training in Horsham at the Grains Innovation Park.

A mix of 14 DELWP and Parks Victoria staff from the Wimmera and Mallee areas are now enthusiastic trained Weed Spotters.

Weed Spotters is a program that assists the Victorian Government to look for and report sightings of State Prohibited Weeds.



Figure 2: Alligator Weed display specimen

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP)

State Prohibited Weeds (SPW) are the highest category of declared noxious weeds in Victoria that are either not yet in Victoria or present only in small eradicable infestations. In Victoria it is an offence to buy, sell, display or transport SPWs. They pose a significant risk to the environment as well as agriculture, social amenities and health.

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The participants were surprised by the places that SPWs can be found, which includes anywhere in Victoria from gardens (including private and public, restaurants and cafes), to waterbodies (including backyard ponds, dams, rivers, creeks and wetlands), markets (including garage sales), online, roadsides and natural areas.



Figure 3: Getting a good look at Mexican Feather Grass

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP)

Attendees really valued the chance to get up close with the display specimens to improve their ability and confidence in identifying SPWs.

The WESI team thanks Biosecurity Officer Zac Munakamwe for travelling to Horsham to train up the latest team of Weed Spotters! You can become a Weed Spotter by contacting weed.spotters@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

Goldweeds joins social media

Many of you are already following the WESI team's journey through Kate on social media (@weedyk8). Now the time has come for Bianca to also get active in the big world of social media, starting with her new Facebook profile [Bianca Goldweeds](#) (@goldiweeds). Please make friends with us or follow us to hear about the adventures of team WESI, weedy information, management tips and related events.

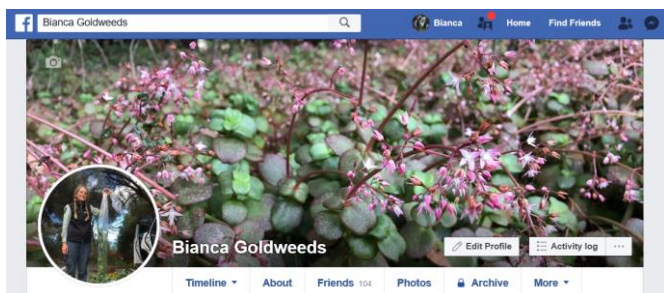


Figure 4: Bianca Goldweeds Profile on Facebook

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

Hunting for Hudson Pear

The WESI team has been out hunting Hudson Pear in the Warracknabeal Rifle Range Flora Reserve in the eastern Wimmera.

Brown-spined Hudson Pear (*Cylindropuntia tunicata*) is a prickly character that deserves attention, so Kate and Bianca have tried their hands at some video filming to help promote awareness of this nasty species.

A raw, unedited version of the video can be viewed via Kate's social media alter ego Kate Bloodweeds.

Stay tuned for more videos to come which we hope will help managers in the battle of early invader weeds.



Figure 5: Brown-spined Hudson Pear

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

Weedy adventures in the wild west

While we're on the subject of Hudson Pear and the Wimmera region of Western Victoria, Bianca has been on an adventure of the wild west with our friends at Parks Victoria with Ranger Team Leader Brandon Galpin.

There are a few species of concern which include the Brown-spined Hudson Pear (*Cylindropuntia tunicata*) at Warracknabeal but also on the hit list are a single Klein's Cholla (*Cylindropuntia kleiniae*) in a small bushland reserve in Minyip and some Common Prickly Pear (*Opuntia stricta*) invading the Wimmera Heritage River.



Figure 6: A rare sight Klein's Cholla in flower

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

It was a great day out working together to identify species, planning the attack and sharing weed management knowledge.



Figure 7: Identifying Klein's Cholla at Minyip BR.

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

New look Weed Society of Victoria

The Weed Society of Victoria (WSV) has a snazzy new logo and updated website to check out! You can now become a WSV member, view archived Weedscape newsletters dating back to 2002 and access resources at the click of a button!



Figure 8: New WSV logo

Credit: Weed Society of Victoria.

WSV is also on social media where you can join their Facebook Group or follow them on Twitter [@society_weed](https://twitter.com/society_weed).

Weed to Watch for: Orange Hawkweed

Be on the look out for Orange Hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*) that has been spotted in Daylesford, Trentham and Blackwood areas of Central Victoria. This State Prohibited Weed has been found on properties, roadsides and in gardens of the region.

Orange Hawkweed poses a significant threat to the natural environment and agricultural production, competing for space and nutrients and having the ability to release chemicals into the soil around it, which impacts growth of other species.

It is highly visible at this time of year with its bright orange flowers.



Figure 9: Orange Hawkweed hairy leaves & bright orange flower

Credit: E.Sakkar (via [nsw.gov.au](https://www.nsw.gov.au) website).

This is a good reminder when you're using our forests to make sure your footwear, hiking equipment, bike and car tyres are clean from seed or other materials that could reproduce plants before entering a new site.

If you see anything resembling Orange Hawkweed, reports can be submitted to Agriculture Victoria by phoning 136 186 or emailing

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weed.spotters@ecodev.vic.gov.au under the category Biosecurity.

Volunteers have been active over the summer in Victoria's high country searching for Orange Hawkweed.



Figure 10: Image from drone detection of Orange Hawkweed flowers

Credit: Rob Matthews (via nsw.gov.au website).

Weeds and Pests on Public Land Program

Did you know that the WESI Project is one of ten projects within the Weeds and Pests on Public Land (WPPL) Program?

This program works to achieve the vision of the “Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037” plan to stop the decline of our native plants and animals and improve our natural environment so it is healthy, valued and actively cared for. The WPPL program has been in operation for 15 years and is delivered by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in partnership with Parks Victoria and 27 other partners and stakeholders across the state.

WPPL funds/manages four streams of project types; predator control, weed control, herbivore control and capability building. The WESI project falls under the fourth stream to assist in building the capability of public land and biodiversity managers in responding to early invader weeds.

For more information visit <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/invasive-plants-and-animals/invasive-species-on-public-land/weeds-and-pests-on-public-land-program>

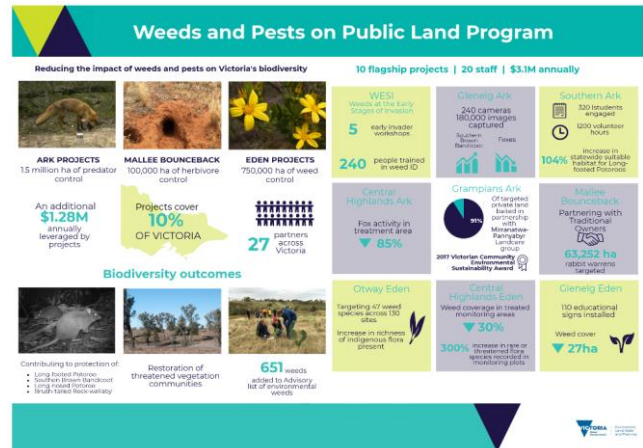


Figure 11: Infographic of WPPL projects

Credit: DELWP WPPL Program

The other projects include Arks (predator control), Edens (weed control) and the Mallee bounceback rabbit control project (herbivore control).

Early Invaders Website

Information about the WESI Project and tools can be easily accessed online via the “early invaders” webpage. You can simply do a web search for “early invaders” or search within the DELWP website.

This page has recently had a revamp and the new “Early Invader Manual” and set of six second edition guides are free to download in PDF document form.

The “Early invader update” newsletters dating back to 2016 are now available on the website for you to read at your leisure. However, we will continue to email the newsletter out to our Friends of WESI around the start of each season with the next issue (#15) coming in June for the Winter edition.

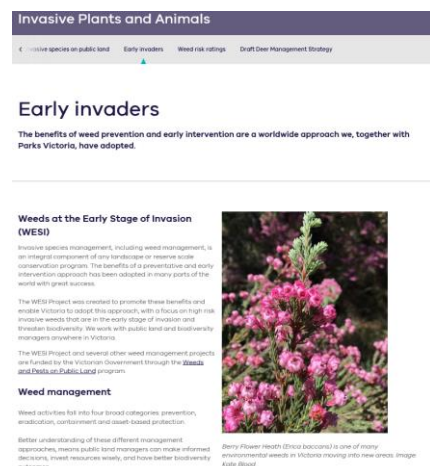


Figure 12: Screenshot of WESI Project “Early invaders” page

Credit: [DELWP Website](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au)

Weed Highlight - Coast Capeweed

The WESI Team have recently had contact from a couple of determined and dedicated volunteers with concerns of an early invader weed appearing on Victoria's Shipwreck Coast.

The culprit is known as Coast Capeweed or Cape Beach Daisy (*Arctotheca populifolia*), which hails from the southern African coastline where it grows in deep sand on coastal dunes and around estuaries.



Figure 13: Coast Capeweed plants

Credit: J and J Young (Citizen Science Project)

Coast Capeweed is a perennial herb with 'flowers' similar to its more common cousin, Capeweed (*Arctotheca calendula*), but with a deep yellow centre.

The seed remains viable in fresh or saltwater and can be spread by ocean currents but is also dispersed by wind.



Figure 14: Coast Capeweed invading sand dunes

Credit: Dan Lees (Birdlife Australia)

It produces roots at the stem joints, giving it the ability to spread rapidly, threatening native dune vegetation, impacting on shorebird nesting habitats, increasing dune biomass and altering coastal processes.

Hand removal of Coast Capeweed plants can be effective, depending on the size of the infestation, but extra care needs to be taken to ensure the whole plant is being taken and appropriate disposal of the plant.

You can help by entering distribution records into the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) or Atlas of Living Australia (ALA). VBA Go is a great way to enter straight from the field but is best for single observations. Also discuss management with the local land manager.



Figure 15: Coast Capeweed plants

Credit: J and J Young (Citizen Science Project)

Upcoming Events

The WESI team is busy planning another Cacti training event, this time in Hume Region in May, so stay tuned to your emails and our social media for more information.

The Victorian Weeds Conference is coming up in May (7th & 8th) in Echuca and registrations are now open via the WSV website.

The 2019 Biosecurity Symposium on the Gold Coast this June (12th to 13th June).

Newcastle will be the host city for the 20th NSW Weeds Conference in August (26th to 29th) register via the conference website.



Figure 16: Victorian Weeds Conference

Credit: Weed Society of Victoria

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Social Media Hot Topics

Don't forget to follow and interact with us on social media. You can find us at **@weedyk8** on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and **Bianca Goldweeds** on Facebook. For DELWP staff you can also follow us on Yammer. #WESIPProject #EarlyInvaderWeeds.

Some hot topics making the rounds at the moment are:

- ❖ Buffel Grass fire risk and spread.
- ❖ Potential for weed spread in QLD floods.
- ❖ Detector dogs come to VIC in search of Hawkweed

If you wish to receive these updates via email please contact Bianca at bianca.gold@delwp.vic.gov.au to be added to the distribution list with the subject heading "subscribe to early invader newsletter". Previous issues are available on the DELWP website. Web search 'early invaders'.

Til next time!

Follow us on social media @weedyk8 and @goldieweeds

<https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/invasive-plants-and-animals/early-invaders>



Your friendly WESI Project Team,
Bianca (aka Goldie) and Kate

If you do not wish to receive these updates, please reply 'unsubscribe' to our email and we will remove you from the list. We will not be sharing your details beyond our project.

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