

June 2018, Issue #11

Welcome to the Winter edition of the newly named Early Invader Update

Introducing the new Project Officer!

We are excited to welcome Bianca Gold, otherwise known as “Goldie” to the WESI project team who officially started on the 14th of May in the WESI Project Officer position, previously filled by Bec James.

Some of you may know Bianca, who has previously worked for the Department in it’s various forms (DELWP, DEPI and DSE) and Parks Victoria Wimmera.

She comes to the WESI project with experience in threatened species, weeds and pest animal management and monitoring.

Bianca will be based in Horsham where she lives with her partner Paul and 3 fur-feather-scaled children, Boston the dog, Arlo the budgie and Pippin the Eastern Bearded Dragon.



Figure 1: WESI Project Officer, Bianca (Goldie) Gold at the recent Opuntoid Cacti Workshop in Bacchus Marsh.

Credit: Kate Blood (DELWP).

Opuntoid Cacti Workshops

The WESI team along with Matt Sheehan from Wild Matters were busy running Opuntoid Cacti Workshops in three locations across the state during May.

Workshops were held in Bacchus Marsh on May 22nd, Ouyen on May 24th and Maffra on May 29th.

We had a fantastic turn out to each of the workshops with a total of 69 attendees over the three locations.



Figure 3: Presentation delivery at the Maffra workshop.

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

Attendees travelled far and wide from various organisations and agencies including Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR), Vic Roads, Catchment Management Authority, Local Government, Landcare Groups, Moogji Aboriginal Council and more.



Figure 3: Matt Sheehan and participants on the Ouyen State Forest field trip. Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

We have received excellent feedback with attendees enjoying hearing about Opuntoid Cacti biology, identification, threats, safety and management. Each of the workshops included a presentation followed by a field trip where participants could put the skills they'd learnt through the presentation session into practice.



Figure 4: Kate Blood talking ID at the Bacchus Marsh field trip.

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

Each of the workshop participants received a copy of the “Weeds of National Significance Managing Opuntoid Cacti in Australia Best Practice control manual” and “Field Identification Guide: *Austrocylindropuntia*, *Cylindropuntia* and *Opuntia* Species (2nd Edition)”.

Copies of the [manual](#) and [field guide](#) can be found online or there are limited hard copies available from Bianca.

21st Australasian Weeds Conference 2018

One oral and two poster papers have been accepted for the 21st Australasian Weeds Conference to be held in Sydney in September this year.

The oral presentation, “Weeds at the Early Stage of Invasion (WESI): Pilot Project Evaluation” will be delivered by Bec James.

In summary the presentation will showcase the findings from the WESI Pilot evaluation showing that they provide a valuable method for testing, refining and gaining adoption of the early invader process and tools in Victoria, and may be beneficial for the development and adoption of other invasive species projects across Australia.

Bianca will be attending the conference as a participant and WESI project representative for the first time.

Update: Advisory List of Environmental Weeds

The “Advisory List of Environmental Weeds” is now available on the [ARI website](#) and for DELWP/Parks Vic staff you can also view on STAR (Spatial Temporal Activity Recorder).

The list comes in two parts, as a PDF document which explains the list process and contents and an abridged species list; and as an accompanying Excel spreadsheet with the list of species and associated information.

The updated list now includes 1786 taxa, early invaders and potential environmental weeds, a combined list that covers all bioregions of Victoria and the 2 documents as mentioned above.

Stay tuned to your emails and the DELWP website as it will also be available to view there.

PV Wimmera Delimiting Survey - Hudson Pear

Staff from Parks Victoria Wimmera have completed a delimiting survey at the Warracknabeal Rifle Range Flora Reserve in April for Hudson Pear (*Brown Spined*) *Cylindropuntia tunicata*.

A single plant was identified near the entrance of the reserve. The eastern section of the reserve had previously been surveyed by WESI project officers (Kate and Bec) along with Bianca (in her Parks Vic role) which did not discover any extra plants in that area of the reserve.

The recent delimiting survey took place in the western section of the reserve and revealed approximately 100 plants (see figure 5). Parks Vic Wimmera used the WESI template from guide number four, “[Looking for weeds: delimiting survey guide](#),” to plan their delimiting survey. They will now follow on with guide number 5, “[Managing weeds: deciding the response guide](#)” to determine the appropriate response to this weed at the early stage of invasion.

The Warracknabeal reserve is the only known site for this species in the Wimmera.



Figure 5: Hudson Pear (Brown Spined) locations at Warracknabeal Rifle Range FR.

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

Statewide Weeds and Pests Team Meeting and Field Trip, Wimmera visit in March

In March, the DELWP Statewide Weeds and Pests team held their quarterly team meeting in the Wimmera. It was held over 2 days and included field and meeting based activities.

During the field trip, the team heard about local management and weed and pest animal issues from both Parks Vic Wimmera and Grampians DELWP staff.

The Wimmera team showed us some interesting challenges in avoiding misidentification and accidental treatment with some introduced species having similarities to native species.

The WESI team participates in these meetings to share our tools, information and advice for management of early invaders.

Keep on liking us!

Don't forget to follow us and interact with us on social media. You can find us at @weedyk8 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and also follow us on Yammer (for DELWP staff). Some interesting things that we have shared recently include:

- Coolatai Grass spreading to Victoria – an invasive plant tolerant of drought, fire and herbicide!
- Weedy Bridal Bouquets – becoming a fashionable statement to have weeds such as pampas grass in bridal bouquets and floral arrangements.
- Giant Hogweed – An invasive species that can cause blindness which has been in cultivation here in Victoria.

Til next time!

Follow us on social media @weedyk8

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

Bianca & Kate
The WESI Project Team

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.

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".

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