

## Welcome to the spring edition of the Early Invader Update

### Castlemaine area WESI weed ID training

The WESI Team delivered the first of its spring training sessions at the Newstead Mechanics Institute Hall on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019.



**Figure 1: Castlemaine weed ID training underway.**

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

The training was delivered to 25 participants in collaboration with Connecting Country. Attendees came from DELWP, Connecting Country, Parks Victoria, Coliban Water, Mount Alexander Shire Council, Landcare groups and Friends of groups.

Kate and Bianca shared specific details about six environmental weed species either new to or at risk of invading the Castlemaine area. The WESI team collected over 65 weeds for display to give participants a chance to polish their ID skills without leaving the classroom.

The weed samples are carefully collected and transported under permit conditions to ensure they are not spread.



**Figure 2: Kate getting amongst the weed samples, talking ID.**

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

Participants enjoyed the various components of the training. They “loved the live weeds display” and found that the training was very useful with “some unexpectedly helpful stuff like the photo and mobile app tips.” They thought it was “easy to digest [with] lots of great info and resources [and] very well presented.”



**Figure 3: Weed display, collected from Castlemaine area.**

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

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The WESI team appreciates hearing feedback and find some comments particularly useful, like “What was most impressive was you taught a process supplemented with resources... the interactive session was excellent, it encouraged observation, curiosity and logical problem solving.”

The next WESI training session will be held in collaboration with Cardinia Shire on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019. The WESI team will be promoting this training event via email and social media. Registrations can be made via [Eventbrite](#).

## Early Invader Fund

WESI would like to share an opportunity with you to help tackle your early invader weed problems.

The Good Neighbour Program (GNP) has a small amount of ‘seeding’ funding available for DELWP staff to apply for undertaking planning and treatment activities of early invader weeds.

Proposed projects should show:

- a focus on invasive plants on public land.
- demonstration of the use of the WESI early invader tools.
- confirmed identification of the weed(s) with evidence.

For an application and information sheet contact Kate Blood at [kate.blood@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:kate.blood@delwp.vic.gov.au).

Applications must be submitted to the WESI Project Manager [kate.blood@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:kate.blood@delwp.vic.gov.au) **by Friday 15th of November 2019** for first round consideration for this 2019/2020 financial year.



Figure 4: An early invader weed, White-spined Hudson Pear (*Cylindropuntia tunicata*) Warracknabeal.

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

## WESI goes to Gippsland

When it comes to invasive species, management collaboration is an important component of dealing with the problem. The WESI Team is part of a number of groups within DELWP to help share information about early invader weeds and provide assistance to our colleagues and stakeholders.

The Statewide Weeds and Pests Team is one of those groups.

We attend meetings across the year and some of those include a field trip for the host region to show-case invasive species management and an opportunity to get some guidance and input from others who have expertise in weed and pest animal management.



Figure 5: Brunton's Bridge over the Thomson River.

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

This time round our host was the Gippsland Region, with Traralgon being our base.

We ventured out to Brunton's Bridge where weeds are becoming a problem, escaping from gardens and travelling downstream from Walhalla.

Blue Periwinkle (*Vinca major*) is invading the banks of the Thomson River and Boola Boola State Forest and is being treated at the Brunton's Bridge Camp Site. Weed control at the site is difficult being near a waterway with steep cliffs and embankments to tackle. Weeds like Blue Periwinkle are easily transported downstream, especially during flood events, to infest new areas.

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**Figure 6: Blue Periwinkle invading the embankment at Brunton's Bridge Camping area.**

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

An otherwise lovely spot, it is currently undergoing a makeover and weed control to protect the environment and promote the site as a family friendly camping area.



**Figure 7: Thomson River and Brunton's Bridge Camp Ground environment**

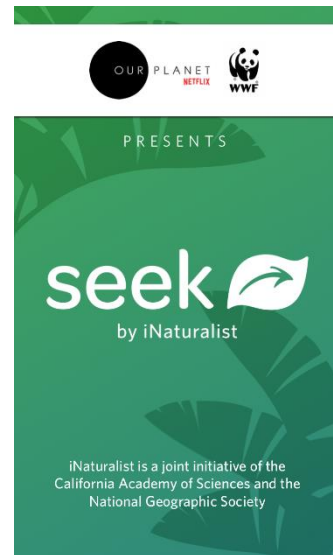
Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

## Weed Tech

Plant recognition applications for mobile devices have been around for a while now. We have recently been trying the '[Seek by iNaturalist](#)' app on our mobile phones. We've been pretty impressed with the ability to identify many of the environmental weeds around Castlemaine during preparation for our recent workshop.

A newsletter from Atlas of Living Australia says: "[iNaturalist](#) Australia is now live and linked with the ALA."

"This week we launched iNaturalist Australia, the Australian node of iNaturalist, the world's leading global social biodiversity network. All observations uploaded to iNaturalist Australia are fed into the Atlas of Living Australia. "



**Figure 7: Seek by iNaturalist screenshot of home screen**

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP)

We are finding it fascinating watching all these systems link and the power of the apps e.g. Seek by iNaturalist, and the data available. What will be next? What interesting weed apps are you using?

## Stephen Sims VBA legend!

We'd like to introduce you to the fantastic Mr Stephen Sims. Stephen is doing amazing things in his "retirement", this year voluntarily contributing a whopping 300,000 plus records and creating 41,500 sites in the [Victorian Biodiversity Atlas](#) (VBA).

As a result of his wonderful effort Stephen was nominated for two prestigious awards, the [2019 Victorian Landcare Award](#) and the Glenelg Hopkins CMA [2019 Environmental Achievers Award](#).

The WESI Team was able to utilise Stephen's drive for data entry by sharing data points collected by volunteers, John and Joan Young of the distribution of Coast Capeweed (*Arctotheca populifolia*) on Victoria's south-west coast (featured in Issue #14). Stephen and the Youngs are now in direct contact and continue to collect and enter data into VBA.

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Figure 7: Stephen Sims (right) with his daughter Rachel (left) and the Honourable Linda Dessau AC Governor of Victoria, at the Victorian Landcare Awards, in August 2019.

Credit: Provided by Stephen Sims.

Through the efforts of volunteers, distribution records for Coast Capeweed will be more accurately shown in the VBA, allowing more informed management decisions.

## Weeds of Melbourne

Weeds of Melbourne (WoM) began as an Instagram account, visually recording the various weeds of the Melbourne area.

Kate has been following the WoM Instagram account for a while and it is now available as a website <https://weedsofmelbourne.org/> where you can view weeds by classification or category, such as paddocks, riparian and native weeds.



Figure 8: Screenshot of Weeds of Melbourne webpage.

Credit: weedsofmelbourne.org

Each weed can be selected to view a profile containing images, scientific and common names, some

background information and links to websites such as [VICFLORA](#) and [Atlas of Living Australia](#).

Weeds of Melbourne is essentially a visual glossary of weeds and weedy heritage to be used as a guide to species of the Melbourne area. It's a great resource.

Have a look at the website or follow on Instagram @weedsofmelbourne and Twitter @melbourneweeds.

## Weed to watch for: Broad Kernel Espartillo

Broad Kernel Espartillo (*Amelichloa caudata*) is a perennial tussock-forming invasive grass, native to South America (Argentina, Chile and Uruguay).

In Victoria, Broad Kernel Espartillo has a scattered distribution in the central part of the state, including Castlemaine, Maryborough, Clunes and Talbot.

It is a weed of temperate grasslands, disturbed sites, waste areas, roadsides and near waterways.

Purplish flowers are similar in appearance to invasive Chilean Needle Grass (*Nassella neesiana*) and Texas Needle Grass (*Nassella leucotricha*), occurring from late spring and continuing through summer (October to February).



Figure 9: Broad Kernel Espartillo flower.

Credit: Rob and Fiona Richardson (Weeds of the South-East Third Edition Pg.56)

Broad Kernel Espartillo can be easily mistaken for an Australian native grass but can be identified by distinguishing features:

- Upright stems that are usually ribbed.
- Very narrow leaves, 1 to 2.5 mm wide, up to 70 cm long.
- Leaves strongly ribbed on both sides and feel rough to touch.

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- Production of small seed heads (cleistogenes) held within the leaf sheaths at the base of the plant.

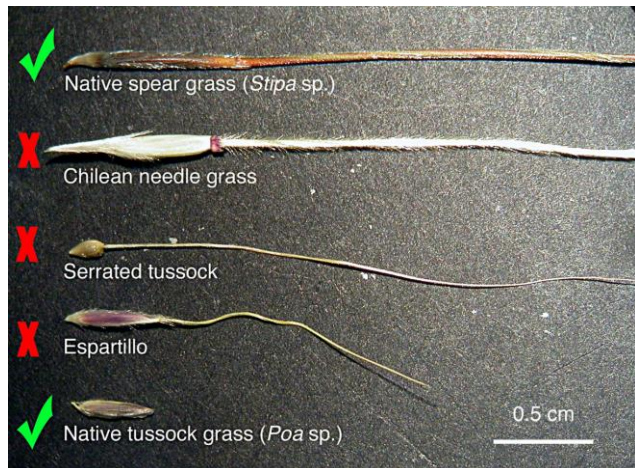


Figure 10: Stipoid grass seed differences.

Credit: Matt Baker (Tasmanian Herbarium - Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery)

If you see what you suspect is Broad Kernel Espartillo notify the land manager and record on VBA or VBA Go. To make contact with local land managers, go through the relevant agency's call centre or main contact number e.g. 136 186 for DELWP and 13 19 63 for Parks Victoria.

## Super easy subscription

Getting your hands on a copy of the "Early Invader Update" is now super easy!

Simply follow this link

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/subscribe-to-early-invader-update-newsletter-tickets-65007285541> to the Eventbrite page, and complete the prompts to subscribe to our free newsletter. We hope you pass this newsletter onto interested others who can then subscribe.



Figure 13: Front page collage of Early Invader Update newsletters.

Credit: Name (organisation). ?

Around the start of each season we will then email a PDF copy of the "Early Invader Update" directly to you!

You can find copies of the previous newsletters (from issue #6 Winter 2016) on the [Early Invaders](#) webpage

## What's coming up?

- [WESI weed ID training with Cardinia Shire 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019.](#)
- [ESA19: the 2019 Conference of the Ecological Society of Australia. 24-29 November 2019](#)

## Fun Fact #1

The invasive Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*) is used for garden stakes and for reeds for clarinets and saxophones.



Figure 12: Left - Giant Reed plant (West Wimmera).

Credit: Bianca Gold (DELWP).

Right - Giant Reed stem (VICFLORA).

Credit: Ian Clarke ([www.vicflora.rbg.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicflora.rbg.vic.gov.au)).

## Social Media Hot Topics

Don't forget to follow and interact with us on social media. You can find us at [Bianca Goldweeds](#) on Facebook and [@weedyk8](#) on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and also follow us on Yammer (for DELWP staff).

**#WESIProj #EarlyInvaders #InvasiveSpecies**

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Some hot topics making the rounds at the moment are:

- An interesting read "[Pretty Poison: VT Study first to confirm invasive plants threaten native wildlife](#)"
- A new invader to Northern California, "[Washington targets invasive aquatic weed](#)" has relevance to Victoria, referred to as South American Spongeplant in this article, we featured it as a "weed to watch for" in Issue #15.
- Another American article that WESI agrees with the concept of "[New tools for invasive species management on national wildlife refuges](#)"

If you wish to receive these updates via email please visit <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/subscribe-free-to-early-invader-update-newsletter-tickets-65007285541> or email Bianca at [bianca.gold@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:bianca.gold@delwp.vic.gov.au) to be added to the distribution list with the subject heading "subscribe to early invader newsletter".

Til next time!

Follow us on social media @weedyk8 and Bianca Goldweeds

<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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