

TUSSOCK TIMES

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A large mature serrated tussock plant discovered and later treated on crown land during recent inspections at Riddells Creek, Victoria

Source: VSTWP.

VICTRACK TACKLES SERRATED TUSSOCK

VicTrack manage 30,000 hectares of railway land outside the rail reserve boundary not actively used for rail purposes. VicTrack are very conscious of its role in managing railway land to reduce fire risk and weeds, noting that operational rail lines are maintained by rail franchisees.

VicTrack has been successfully managing serrated tussock infestations on approximately 3 - 4km of closed rail line in the Hamilton area over the past few years, working with the State Government to ensure the sites are treated each season prior to seeding.

VicTrack Infrastructure Asset Officer, Pamela James said that plants had always been dug out on this line as it is not possible to safely get a vehicle in to spray. "The number of plants has been decreasing with each year, this was particularly apparent in 2014 and can be attributed in part to our contractor locating and removing a number of plants just as they were coming into seed," she said.

Further control works will continue around Hamilton in the coming months, with the aim of

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VICTRACK TACKLE SERRATED TUSSOCK *(continued)*

eradicating the outlier sites along the VicTrack managed land. VicTrack also treated an outlier site near the Riddells Creek train station, after Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party (VSTWP) Extension Officer Ivan Carter discovered the infestation during an inspection earlier in the 2014.

The works to treat serrated tussock infestations on rail land by VicTrack have received praise from adjoining private landowners, who have themselves meticulously been treating infestations over the past 12 months in collaboration with the VSTWP's Riddells Creek Extension Project.

"VicTrack have been on-board with the VSTWP Extension Projects to ensure coordinated treatments are conducted across all land tenures," said Pamela James. VicTrack and V/Line will both lead by example and engage contractors to check for infestations and carry out any follow up treatments, where required.

The VSTWP would like to thank VicTrack for their ongoing efforts in supporting our projects across Victoria, and look forward to collaborating further on future projects in 2015.

VIDEO CASE STUDIES . . NOW AVAILABLE FOR VIEWING ON THE VSTWP WEBSITE

The VSTWP are proud to announce some recent upgrades to our website, including the addition of a number of videos that highlight successful case studies in managing serrated tussock in Victoria.

The videos were produced by the Lismore Land Protection Group, through a collaborative project aimed at educating landowners on the impacts of serrated tussock. The case study videos have been uploaded onto our website for streaming and can be viewed via the internet. Also added to the website are videos to help landowners identify serrated tussock and interviews with various land managers regarding serrated tussock.

We would like to acknowledge the following individuals, groups, departments and businesses involved in the production of these videos: The Lismore Land Protection Group, The Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Victorian Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative, Valtek Video, Duncan and Maxine Campbell at Barwonleigh, Scott Chirnside at Mount Rothwell and Weering: founding member of the VSTWP, and John Sheehan at Yaloak Estate.

Please explore the new videos, case studies and upgrades to our website at www.serratedtussock.com



The video case studies highlight the importance of early detection of isolated plants.

Source: VSTWP

2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The VSTWP recently held their Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 26th of November 2014 at Bacchus Marsh. The meeting was well attended by community members and stakeholders alike.

After all positions were vacated a new committee was formed. Long-time Chair Jim Seager chose not to renominate as a member of the VSTWP and Peter Lindeman has for the time being taken on the role of interim Chair, until a permanent Chairperson can be found. The VSTWP would like to thank Jim Seager for his commitment and contribution to the control of serrated tussock in Victoria during his time on the VSTWP committee.

Virginia Lawrence chose to remain in the role of Treasurer, while Wendy Bitans, John Burgess, John Webb Ware and Peter Stellar are staying on as Community Representatives. The VSTWP would also like to welcome Margot Galletly to the VSTWP Committee as a new community representative.



Margot farms livestock on a property at Modewarre on the Victorian Western Volcanic Plains, and has much experience controlling serrated tussock in the region. For further details of the VSTWP Committee please visit our website at www.serratedtussock.com

The AGM also featured an interesting presentation from Jackie Steel of Biosciences Victoria, who spoke about the ongoing research into computer modelling that simulates potential serrated tussock distribution in West Gippsland over the coming decades inline with various management scenarios. The VSTWP are hoping to upload the presentation onto our website in the coming months.

2013/2014 PROGRESS REPORT

The Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party's 2013 - 2014 Progress Report is now available for viewing at www.serratedtussock.com

The report contains information on the projects, achievements and successes carried out by the VSTWP in the last financial year, and also provides an important snapshot of the work the VSTWP is involved with.

Some of the 2013/14 achievements and highlights noted in the Progress Report include:

- Community engagement, extension and educational services delivered in 5 target communities as part of the VSTWP's Targeted Extension Program.
- Over 20,000 hectares assessed for serrated tussock.
- 368 landowners were provided educational services.
- 425 hectares treated for serrated tussock throughout the 5 extension projects.
- Production and distribution of 4 editions of the Tussock Times newsletter, each edition being delivered to over 300 subscribers.
- Over 1500 pieces of extension material distributed.
- Creation of 2 display banners promoting the VSTWP.
- Delivery of paper on 'Building the Capacity of Communities to Manage Serrated Tussock', at the 5th Biennial Victorian Weeds Conference.
- New look website www.serratedtussock.com launched in August 2013, a total of 801 visits were recorded in 2013/14.
- Three extension officers contracted to deliver concurrent timely projects across Victoria.



WYNDHAM CITY COUNCILS UPCOMING WEED EXPO

The VSTWP will offer land management support and extension information at an upcoming Weed Expo hosted by Wyndham City Council.

The event will be held at the Little River School Fete (in the Mechanics Hall) on Sunday 15th March and will feature a variety of stakeholders from the public and private sector.

Wyndham City Council's Natural Environment Officer, Trevor Prowd said "The main aim of the event will be to show the community what land management support programs are available and to answer questions regarding land management options, identification and legislative requirements for invasive plants".

Also invited to the event are local Landcare groups, Government Representatives, Western Melbourne Catchment Network and the Geelong Landcare Network.

The VSTWP will be represented on the day by the Community Engagement Officer Ivan Carter, who will have a variety of banners, extension materials, case studies and a live specimen.



For further details of the Weed Expo please call Wyndham City Council on (03) 9742 0777.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND FEEDBACK

The VSTWP would like to thank the following people for contributing to this edition of the Tussock Times. Ivan Carter (VSTWP), Pamela James (VicTrack) and Trevor Prowd (Wyndham City Council).

The Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party welcomes your contributions and feedback.

For contributions, feedback or to be added to or removed from the mailing list, please contact:

VSTWP Executive Officer

Phone: (03) 5366 0000

Email: info@serratedtussock.com

In our efforts to reduce the number of newsletters being printed if you currently receive a hardcopy of this newsletter but have access to email please send your email address to the Executive Officer.

More information on serrated tussock can be found on the Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party website: www.serratedtussock.com or at DEPI online: www.depi.vic.gov.au or by contacting Customer Service on 136 186.

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