

# TUSSOCK TIMES

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Landowners in Tasmania share serrated tussock options. *Source: Mandy Coulson*

## VSTWP EXTENDS A HAND TO TASMANIA

Tasmanian farmers, Landcare staff and government representatives were enlightened by the Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party (VSTWP) at a serrated tussock field day, recently held in southern Tasmania.

The day was organised by the Tasman Landcare Group, and the Working Party were invited along to share their extensive experience and knowledge in the management of serrated tussock.

Following a large grassfire in the area two years ago, the Tasman Landcare Group is helping land managers in the Tasman Catchment area to manage serrated tussock and other weeds

that are a risk to agricultural assets.

The appearance and spread of serrated tussock across the landscape has forced many landowners to explore and implement integrated weed management programs.

Jen Milne, from the Sorell Council said, "the day aimed to share key learnings' from the past two years, as well as hear experiences from guest speakers from other areas."

VSTWP Extension Officer, Mandy Coulson represented the Working Party at the event and delivered a presentation focused on the

*(continued page 2)*



## VSTWP EXTENDS A HAND TO TASMANIA *(continued)*

VSTWP's strategic approach to managing serrated tussock in Victoria, and of the experiences gained from the targeted extension projects.

Serrated tussock control options were openly discussed by all in attendance, with Mandy providing expert advice on suitable management options for difficult areas.

With sound technical advice and collaborative discussion, the attendants of the field day were left well equipped to develop and implement local trial work for education and extension purposes.

The opportunity to share ideas and learnings' between states was extremely beneficial for all involved, and with this knowledge base, the fight to control and manage serrated tussock in Australia will be strengthened .

## VSTWP ENGAGE AT WEED EXPO

The VSTWP recently attended a Weeds Expo held at the Little River Mechanics Institute, taking the opportunity to engage with landowners, stakeholders and interest groups from all over Victoria.

The Expo was hosted by Wyndham City Council, and featured a variety of stalls and information booths from the public and private sector. The Expo was a great success with a strong crowd in attendance throughout the day, learning how best to manage areas heavily infested with invasive plants for the long term with the aim of returning the land to full productivity.

VSTWP Community Engagement Officer ,Ivan Carter attended the VSTWP information booth, which featured live serrated tussock specimens and a variety of extension material and information resources . "The VSTWP information booth proved to be a great resource for landowners fighting serrated tussock in the area, with landowners being provided relevant information on how to implement best practice serrated tussock management options" noted Mr Carter.

"Many interested landowners commented that the information provided by the VSTWP was both useful and informative and would help them to

better manage their properties for productivity and biodiversity" said Mr Carter.

Around 100 landowners sought information on the identification and management of serrated tussock. Serrated tussock continuing to be a major concern for many landowners across the state.



Trevor Proud from Wyndham City Council providing weed advice at the Wyndham Weed Expo.

Source: VSTWP

## RIDDELLS CREEK STAGE 2 EXTENSION COMPLETE

**The Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party (VSTWP) has delivered a successful serrated tussock extension program to support landowners to the south and west of the Riddells Creek township.**

Made possible through a Caring For Our Country Federal grant, the project followed on from the Stage 1 Riddells Creek project completed in 2013/14, and has improved landowner knowledge in both the identification and treatment of serrated tussock.

Beginning in August 2014, Stage 2 offered the 159 landowners in the target area the opportunity to attend an information session, receive educational advice, have their property assessed and mapped for serrated tussock infestations, and apply for potential financial assistance to treat infestations.

The outcomes from the project have seen landowners conduct treatment on approximately 30 hectares of serrated tussock across the target area and also improve their knowledge on how to identify the invasive plant. A number of eligible landowners took up the financial incentives on offer, (involving a co-payment and/or co-contribution) to ensure their infestations were treated prior to seeding.

VSTWP Extension Officer Ivan Carter said he “mostly found scattered serrated tussock infestations during the inspections in the Riddells Creek area, which if left untreated will rapidly decrease biodiversity in native grasslands and seriously reduce the agricultural capacity of properties”. Carter also noted “there were a few areas of dense serrated tussock that required timely treatment, which was both concerning and detrimental to the local agricultural and environmental assets of the region.”

“Luckily the landowners were keen to treat the serrated tussock once it was identified, particularly after the grassfire had created an ideal canvas for new seedlings of serrated tussock to germinate”.

Although fire does not kill adult serrated tussock plants, it does remove the biomass (the thatch) and destroy surface seed.

The VSTWP will commence a targeted extension project in the Gisborne area in May 2015 and will launch the project with an information day.



Isolated plants discovered during property inspections.

Source: Ivan Carter

### DID YOU KNOW?

**Leasing land is a means for some farms to expand their business by gaining access to additional resources without the upfront cost of purchasing land.**

This can be very useful where there is a shortage of operating funds, but there are some important points to check before signing a lease agreement.

Property lease agreements often contain a clause that stipulates the lessee is responsible for weed control. It is vital to understand what this means and the importance of checking a lease agreement for this clause.

If a weed control matter were to go before the Magistrates Court the lessee is legally responsible for weed control and therefore liable.

**It is therefore important to read contracts thoroughly, and be aware of responsibilities regarding weed management, especially if there are substantial existing weed infestations on the property.**

## VSTWP CREATE YOUTUBE CHANNEL

The VSTWP are proud to announce the creation of a VSTWP YouTube channel, which features a variety of serrated tussock related videos for public viewing and educational use.

The six videos on the channel were produced by the Lismore Land Protection Group, through a collaborative project aimed at educating landowners on the impacts of serrated tussock.

The videos feature landowners who have been successfully managing serrated tussock for a number of years, as well as videos on how to identify serrated tussock. There is also a video giving the historical overview of the VSTWP and the background on the creation of the group in the mid 1990s.

The channel can be viewed from any internet connected computer, smartphone or tablet, and has already proved a valuable resource, receiving roughly 120 views in the first month.

The YouTube channel can be found by typing "Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party (VSTWP)" into the YouTube channel search or going to the internet address below:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvgZB5vBvLjOVf8pk6INM2Q>

Please explore the new videos and all the channel has to offer on serrated tussock management.



## CONTRIBUTIONS AND FEEDBACK

The VSTWP would like to thank the following people for contributing to this edition of the Tussock Times. Ivan Carter (VSTWP) and Mandy Coulson (VSTWP)

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:

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*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](http://www.serratedtussock.com) or at DEPI online: [www.depi.vic.gov.au](http://www.depi.vic.gov.au) or by contacting Customer Service on 136 186.*

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