

TUSSOCK TIMES

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VicTrack officers inspect the linear reserve for serrated tussock (Source: VicTrack)

VICTRACK CONTINUES TUSSOCK BATTLE

Linear reserve manager VicTrack has been successfully managing serrated tussock infestations across Victoria over the past 12 months, working with the State Government and the VSTWP to ensure priority sites are treated prior to seeding.

One such priority site is located at Hamilton, its significance owing to the low levels of serrated tussock occurring in the region and the threat posed to western Victoria's agricultural assets if left uncontrolled. VicTrack Asset Officer, Pamela James, said "the Hamilton site is a priority and is inspected four times per year. Any plants detected are removed promptly, before they produce seed."

Vic Track aims to eradicate the Hamilton infestation, this will require perseverance and an ongoing monitoring and management regime.

Other serrated tussock sites treated by VicTrack over the past 12 months include:

- ◆ Riddells Creek
- ◆ Melton
- ◆ Little River
- ◆ Melton
- ◆ Upfield
- ◆ Werribee
- ◆ Whittlesea
- ◆ South Morang
- ◆ Rockbank
- ◆ Newport
- ◆ Mernda

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VICTRACK CONTINUE TUSSOCK BATTLE (CONTINUED)

The treatment of serrated tussock on public land by VicTrack is welcomed by the many adjoining private landowners treating their own infestations as part of a VSTWP community-led 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 aims to lead by example, engaging contractors to monitor for the appearance of serrated tussock and carry-out follow-up treatments when required in the VSTWP target areas.



A small serrated tussock plant removed during the seasonal inspection by VicTrack staff and contractors.

(Image Source: VicTrack)

A BUSY DAY AT THE BALLAN AUTUMN FESTIVAL.

The VSTWP had a busy day at the popular Ballan Autumn Festival in late March 2016, with a constant stream of people visiting the VSTWP stall to learn tips on how to identify and manage serrated tussock.

Drawing much attention was the live display of serrated tussock and native Poa grass, where people were given the opportunity to compare the two plants. "When comparing the two plants side by side, the differences become quite apparent" "learning to recognise these differences will help safeguard against misidentification." said Community Engagement Officer, Ivan Carter.

The purpose of the day was to share and highlight the Working Party's extensive work on serrated tussock control and management in Victoria and provide information on best practice management options to those new to the region.

Almost 100 serrated tussock identification and management brochures were handed out, and the landowner case study brochures again proved very popular. "The landowner case studies, along with

the online videos, are well-liked by the public. They are a testament that persistence and the application of integrated control measures are fundamental to reducing serrated tussock for the long-term." said Mr Carter.

For more information please visit:

www.ballanautumnfestival.org/



The live specimens of serrated tussock and native tussock proved popular once again.

(Image Source: VSTWP).

VSTWP PRESENTS AT BIODIVERSITY WORKSHOP

VSTWP Community Engagement Officer, Ivan Carter presented an overview of the VSTWP at a recent Biodiversity Workshop. Ivan's presentation included details of the VSTWP's formation, its many achievements, and some of the ongoing and future challenges for all those managing serrated tussock.

The event was organised by environmental service provider, Aus Eco Solutions and was held at the Dingo Discovery Sanctuary and Research Centre in Toolern Vale. Established in 1990, the Sanctuary and Research Centre aims to preserve and conserve the original gene pool of the Australian Dingo into the future, using the best possible husbandry methods and practices.

The Workshop was well attended by landowners, contractors and experts in the field, and was an interactive celebration of flora and fauna biodiversity, where suppliers, strategic partners and guest speakers could share their biodiversity knowledge.

"The event provided an excellent opportunity to talk about the challenges and possibilities that lie ahead, and share some of the Working Party's many achievements accrued since the group's formation in 1995". "We tend to focus on the problem and don't take the time to rejoice our successes. The workshop was a good opportunity to let people know what the VSTWP get up to and how many landowners are assisted each year through its programs. said Mr Carter

The day was concluded with a weed-steaming demonstration by Aus Eco Solutions, who are currently conducting trials on the effectiveness of using high temperature steam to treat serrated tussock in a variety of scenarios. The VSTWP plans to closely monitor this trial and will provide readers with updates on the progress and success of this exciting technology.

As a final treat, those in attendance were given an opportunity to take time out with the Dingoes.

More information on the Dingo Foundation can be found at:
<http://www.dingofoundation.org/sanctuary.php>



Some of the workshop attendees share some time with the Dingos.
 (Image Source: VSTWP)

I.D BROCHURE NOW AVAILABLE IN LOTE

The VSTWP are pleased to announce that their popular **Serrated Tussock Identification Brochure** is now available in a selection of 'languages other than English' (LOTE).

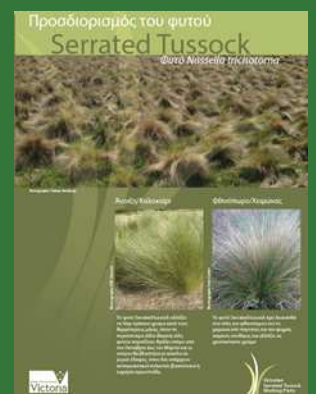
The brochure has been translated into six additional languages and is sure to be a valuable tool in the fight against serrated tussock.

The brochure provides step-by-step details on how to identify serrated tussock and contains images showing the identifying features of the plant.

The six languages for the new edition of the Identification Brochure are: Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Macedonian and Vietnamese.

The brochures are available, for immediate download, on the VSTWP's website:
www.serratedtussock.com/serrated-tussock-translations

A limited number of hardcopies are also available and can be requested through:
info@serratedtussock.com



BE MINDFUL OF SEED SPREAD

The small size of serrated tussock seed can often lead to it being unwittingly spread by even the most meticulous landowner.

Conduits of seed spread that are at times overlooked include the introduction of new livestock to a property or even landscaping material such as gravel or mulch.

The germination of a few stray serrated tussock plants can often go unnoticed and in no time at all will develop into a sizeable infestation, which if not controlled quickly, may become a costly long-term problem.

To help draw attention to some of the ways serrated tussock seed may be transported, the VSTWP recently produced a brochure highlighting possible pathways of seed spread. The brochure is applicable to most weeds and provides a number of best practice strategies landowners can implement to help mitigate the risk.

For this and other helpful brochures please visit: www.serratedtussock.com/serrated-tussock-educational-info



TUSOCK IN WINTER

Readers are reminded to keep their eyes open for serrated tussock over the winter months and to begin planning winter / spring treatment programs.



Image source: Ag Vic.

During winter, the cooler temperatures and frosts bleach the foliage of serrated tussock, turning it a pale yellow or straw-colour.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND FEEDBACK

The VSTWP would like to thank the following people for contributing to this edition of the Tussock Times: Pamela James (VicTrack), Ivan Carter (VSTWP) & Julie Graham (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 or by contacting the DELWP Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

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