

TUSSOCK TIMES

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Landowners learn the finer points of identification at Bellbrae (Source: VVSTWP)

WINTRY FUN AT BELLBRAE FAIR

The VSTWP had a wintry blast at the usually popular Bellbrae Primary School Fair in early winter 2016, with landowners and managers having a chance to see live serrated tussock specimens and learning how to best manage serrated tussock infestations.

The weather was unusually wild and wet, with numbers at the annual school fair well down on previous years, but the VSTWP and Landcare Groups persisted through the storms to ensure landowners weren't left disappointed.

Of most interest again was the live specimens of serrated tussock and native poa grass, where landowners could compare the

two side by side. "The best way to learn to identify this noxious weed is to see the two similar plants side by side so you can identify the differences," said Community Engagement Officer Ivan Carter. "Also of great interest was the competition to guess the number of jellybeans in the jar, which always attracts people to the stall".

The VSTWP shared the stall with local Landcare groups which aims to attract people to a variety of different displays and share and highlight the VSTWP's extensive work on serrated tussock control and management in Victoria, and present information on best practice management to new landowners in the region.



Tussock Times is a newsletter of the
Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party

www.serratedtussock.com



WINTRY FUN AT BELLBRAE FAIR (CONTINUED)

The region around Torquay and surrounds is subject to low to medium density infestations of serrated tussock, with landowners keen to get on top of new infestations before they become established.

The VSTWP provided information sheets and highlighted some successful landowners managing larger infestations of serrated tussock across the state of Victoria. "The new pathways of spread brochure, along with the online videos, have proved to be really popular with the community and highlight that

prevention is the key to succeeding in reducing the impact and costs of this invasive plant," said Mr Carter.

The next event for the VSTWP will be the Kyneton, Kilmore and Whittlesea agricultural shows, which are in succession in late spring and early summer, hopefully with improved weather and larger crowds.

For more information on the BellBrae Fair, please visit www.bellbraeps.vic.edu.au

PROTECTING WYNDHAM'S ENVIRONMENT

Wyndham City is encouraging Wyndham landowners, particularly in the Little River area, to partner in a weed control program to prevent the spread of serrated tussock.

Eligible landowners can receive grants to control the weed on their properties, with Council also overseeing an aerial spraying program to treat serrated tussock in some of Wyndham's most heavily infested areas.

The spraying program is safe for humans and is performed close to the ground, meaning it will target the serrated tussock and not damage any crops or pastures in the area. Wyndham City's Environment Portfolio Holder, Cr Peter Gibbons, said serrated tussock was a significant threat to Wyndham's natural environment.

"While serrated tussock looks very similar to many native grass species, it is in fact a threat to the biodiversity of local ecosystems," Cr Gibbons said. "The weed also creates a serious fire risk, with a recorded burn intensity of up to seven times greater than native grasslands."

"Some of Wyndham's rural areas are heavily infested with serrated tussock, which is why Council

is encouraging landowners to take advantage of funding available through its Land Protection Grant Scheme."

"Through this grant scheme, Wyndham landowners who do their own weed control can receive a cash payment when they have completed the works. Alternatively, Council can contribute 75 per cent of the cost of controlling the weeds if a contractor is used."

Serrated tussock is one of the priority noxious weeds in Wyndham and works to control it should be carried out during winter and early spring, prior to seeding which occurs in November.

For more information about serrated tussock or to find out if you are eligible for the Land Protection Grant Scheme, visit www.wyndham.vic.gov.au or call the Wyndham City Council on 9742 0777.

Large treated infestations of serrated tussock (Source: VSTWP)



VSTWP HOST STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

The VSTWP have hosted and delivered a stakeholder workshop aimed at renewing action on serrated tussock in the core infestation areas across Victoria with improved collaboration to achieve control strategy outcomes.

The workshop was held on Wednesday 24th of August 2016 in Bacchus Marsh, with 33 representatives attending from around 20 relevant stakeholders. The workshop was led by an independent facilitator and focused on collaboration and sharing ideas that are working well and improving areas of concern.

The chairperson of the VSTWP John Burgess said "this workshop has proved that when the relevant stakeholders are brought together with a common aim of renewing action and collaboration, actions can be developed to achieve desirable outcomes in the future." The workshop covered three major topics of interest, which were developed during pre-surveys of the stakeholders:

- What we do well and why it works and what we don't do well.
- How can we work better together on the issues in the core? Collaboration.
- What support and resources do we need to achieve your goals of serrated tussock control?

The workshop also allowed each stakeholder to share their activities and successes, as well as potential ways to collaborate on issues between regions and organisations. The VSTWP has compiled a summary of the actions, 'what needs improving' and new ideas from the workshop, and will meet to discuss how to potentially implement the relevant ideas.

Some of the common themes discussed and proposed were expanding the VSTWP Extension Officers into the core infestation areas, collaborating on treatments and programs and looking into future research options for improved treatment.

For more information, please contact the VSTWP's Community Engagement Officer Ivan Carter on info@serratedtussock.com.



Stakeholders discussing the best ways to collaborate on renewing action in the core region. (Source: VSTWP)

UPCOMING VSTWP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The VSTWP would like to invite you to attend their Annual General Meeting to be held on Wednesday 23rd of November at Bacchus Marsh, at which time all committee positions will be vacated and a new committee formed.

The committee comprises eight community representatives who work towards achieving the VSTWP vision: 'to control the spread of serrated tussock in Victoria and reduce the impacts on the economy, society and the environment by overseeing the implementation of the objectives of the Victorian Serrated Tussock Strategy 2012-2017.'

Committee members are required to attend quarterly VSTWP meetings and may at times be requested to represent the VSTWP at external events, comment on documents, or present information to groups or communities impacted by serrated tussock.

Nominations for committee positions are currently being accepted, and the VSTWP encourages concerned community members and other key stakeholders interested in the management of serrated tussock to nominate. If you would like to attend the AGM or are interested in nominating a suitable community member to become a committee representative, please contact the Executive Officer on info@serratedtussock.com

WEEDWISE APP NOW AVAILABLE

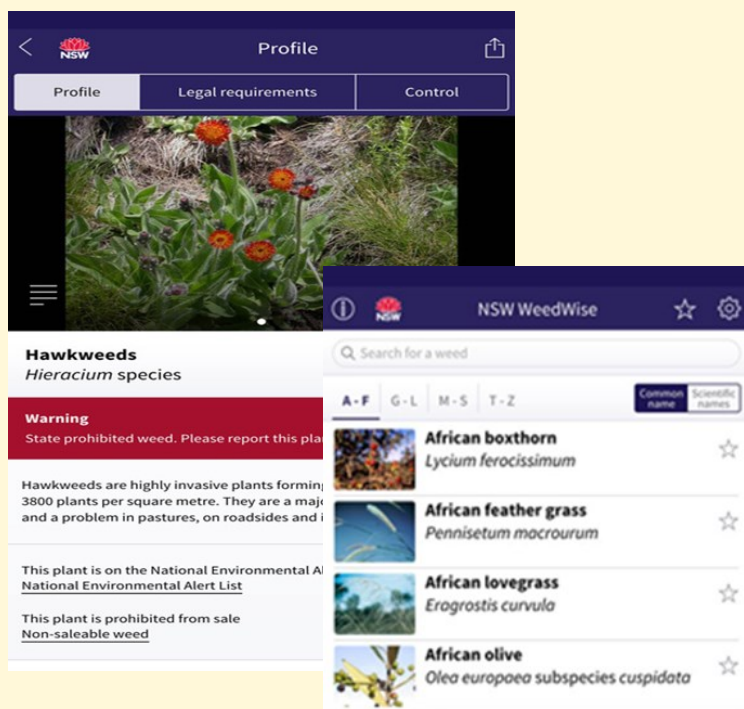
Landowners and managers alike will now have access and information for over 300 noxious weeds on their smartphones and tablets through the development of the new WeedWise App.

The app has been released by the New South Wales State Government and is now freely available for iPhone and iPad on the App Store and for Android smartphones on Google play. The app will also scale up for use on most Android tablets.

The Weedwise app combines weed profiles, images and control options for most noxious and environmental weeds across Australia, including serrated tussock. Weed professionals can share information with clients, and landholders can report priority weeds in NSW.

The App is free and well worth a look for the images and control options for many common noxious weeds.

Any questions or feedback about the app can be emailed to weeds@dpi.nsw.gov.au



Some screen shots from the newly launched free Weedwise smart phone and tablet app (Source: Weedwise)

CONTRIBUTIONS AND FEEDBACK

The VSTWP would like to thank the following people for contributing to this edition of the Tussock Times:

Trevor Prowd, Ivan Carter

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
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 by contacting the DEDJTR Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

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