

# Mid Murray Landcare SA

Mobile 0427 590 344: Email [admin@midmurraylandcaresa.org.au](mailto:admin@midmurraylandcaresa.org.au)  
[www.midmurraylandcaresa.org.au](http://www.midmurraylandcaresa.org.au)

## Activity Update August 2021

This activity update is for the month of August. If you would like to be on our mailing list and receive this free update, please email Aimee Linke on the above email address or view on webpage. These projects are made up of several sources of funding including Grassroots Grants, the Iron Grass Grassland Project, Healthy Rivers Grant plus some other small grants and contract work.

## Meldanda

1. Managed the volunteers, camp bookings, provision of materials and equipment and all necessary administrations including invoicing and banking for Meldanda. Kept neighbors informed of any camp bookings. Ordered 9,000 litres of water to fill up the potable water tank.
2. Provided a tour for Keyneton Primary School at Meldanda and we did the Bushtucker Trail quiz, looked at pollinator plants, butterfly food plants and rare and endangered species.
3. We had a camp of 33 Pathfinders at Meldanda, they really enjoyed their stay; *'In particular the volleyball area and the chess game were popular. We taught them about the Stars, and we were all very surprised that the sky cleared at night, and we were able to see constellations and the milky way right above us. On Sunday a few had a go at the Frisbee Golf..... We would love to visit again. PS) The River Marne did not make it in time for us to see water running through it. The Cockies Tongue Bush was beautiful.'*
4. We have issues with the plumbing again, the septic isn't draining away properly because tree roots are clogging up the pipes and the septic itself. We have had it pumped out again and will have to regularly drain the water out until something more permanent can be sorted out.



Figure 1 Keyneton Primary School Tour



Figure 2 roots clogging up septic tank

5. Andrew Cool camped out at Meldanda to gather darkness measurements for the RMDSR Annual report.
6. Volunteer Wayne tidied up the paths and grounds in the Bushtucker garden. Wayne and Sheralee tidied up other paths around Mermaid Lake and the frisbee golf course.
7. Mt Barker Scouts camped at Meldanda for a weekend and did some Bushcare activities assisting with pest control monitoring by covering over rabbit scratching's in the Bushgardens so we can monitor if there is any fresh activity.
8. Aimee provided a tour of Meldanda for Tree's for Life "Habitat Steppingstones" project they are running with migrants. We also did some planting in the Fire-Retardant Display Garden and included some Silver Daisy in there, one of the project plants they are focusing on.
9. Volunteers Wayne and Sheralee did some follow up planting in the Fire-Retardant Garden and made sure all the plants were getting watered.
10. MMC Lachlan Graetz sprayed the paths and carpark areas for us with the quad bike.
11. Chris O'Keefe from Cambrai Primary School has been busy getting the running track ready for an upcoming school event. Chris has also cut down some of the dead bushes in the front garden.



Figure 3 Mt Barker Scouts around the campfire



Figure 4 Mt Barker Scouts Campsite

## Community Nursery

12. Volunteers Cryss, Brenton and Royce have been propagating cuttings of different *Eremophila* species and *Myoporum*. They have also been propagating seed of *Lasiopetalum behrii* and *baueri* (Velvet bush), Native pine, Nitre bush, Spreading flax lily (*Dianella revoluta*), *Hakea leucoptera*, *Olearia passerinoides* amongst many others and doing cuttings.
13. Keyneton Primary School visited our community nursery and purchased some plants for their school projects. They also looked at our wicking beds which is something they will set up at the school.

14. Donated 100 Sheoak to a landholder that has Diamond Firetails on their property.  
Donated 40 River Saltbush to landholder in Blanchetown. Coordinating people to pick up their plant orders. Roonka Scouts picked up their plant order and so did landholder Peter Lee
15. Volunteers sowed some carrot seedlings and seeds of peas and beans in the wicking beds. Brenton made some new mesh fences for the trailing plants to climb up
16. **Spiny Daisy Project** - Volunteers took cuttings from the plants that we are growing at the nursery that grew from seed from plants collected from Banrock Station for the Spiny Daisy Recovery team to see if they have a similar softer form like the parent plants. (GRG 22).
17. Keyneton PS is keen to have some of this plant at their school to help protect and educate on endangered species. One of the parents came and picked up 6 seedlings we had of Melrose clone, and they will grow it at the school.



Figure 5 volunteers taking cuttings of spiny daisy grown from seed.



Figure 6 AGM Blanchetown Hall

## Committee & other

18. Managed the office, volunteers and all necessary administrations including monthly payment of bills, reports, managing webpages and social media posts, scanned all receipts and reconciled monthly accounts in XERO. Aimee updated her working with children's clearances. Signed agreements for new Grass Roots Grants and sent off invoices.
19. Prepared for upcoming AGM which we held at Blanchetown Community Hall. We had about 20 people attend the event. The local Hall Committee catered for us and did a great job, especially with the COVID restrictions that were in place.
20. Rowena Danks completed final report for Landcare in the Mallee 2021 which has been acquitted, signed, and submitted
21. Took part in citizen Science Project 'soil your undies'
22. **Regent Parrot Project** – Rowena and Aimee had a Microsoft Teams Regent Parrot Recovery Team Meeting in the car at Blanchetown 12/8/21, agenda items were Trackers update and future actions, Native plants for distribution to landholders, Healthy Rivers grant – Whole of river nest survey, Native plant distribution, Grass Roots grant -grower engagement etc., Website upgrade (GRG 22)



## River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve by Chris Tugwell

23. National Science Week project 'Discovering the impacts of light pollution' date and location changed to Swan Reach School Gymnasium for the 11<sup>th</sup> of September.
24. Prepared and promoted flyer for event. Received promotional products from National Science Week for the event. Have been receiving registrations through the webpage.
25. Committee meeting on 13/08/21, Aimee took the minutes
26. David Bennett site visit to Meldanda to take photos for SA Power Networks application
27. Finalising of Council's Astro-Tourism Strategy (Andrew Cool, Don Bursill, David Bennett, Chris Tugwell)
28. Don Bursill and Chris Tugwell meeting with Chief Scientist re Smithsonian exhibition
29. Chris Tugwell meeting re possible student internship to design visitor's centre interior
30. Chris Tugwell discussion with architect Graham Hardy re planetarium/observatory concept
31. Chris Tugwell meeting with children's author Sally Heinrich re dark sky themed children's story
32. Installation of Dark Sky Reserve tourist signs have begun
33. Confirmed change of dates for Science Week event

## Irongrass Grasslands Project

34. We have had 9mm of rain on the trial site at Meldanda in August.
35. **SPA** – Volunteers Sheralee, Paul and Andy weeded the SPA, Sheralee and Wayne sprayed around the enclosures for weeds.
36. Sowed in the nursery *Rhodanthe pygmaea*, *Whalenbergia sp.*, *Setaria constricta* and *Ptilotus spathulatus* (Pussytails).
37. Volunteer Sheralee and Aimee tidied up the grass orchard to remove dirt, Eucalyptus leaves and seed, cut back some of the grasses.
38. **Trials** – Went up to Hallett to see the sowing of the revegetation trial at Greg and Liz Hall's property. Glenn Christie from Succession Ecology and a contractor with a super spreader sowed the mix of native grassland seed species. The seed then must find its own niche in the pre cultivated soil.
39. Provided an update at the Landcare AGM in Blanchetown on the seed production area, what the volunteers had done, the number of seed that was produced in the SPA's and the trials
40. Sent Services Agreements to contractors ready for Poonthie Ruwe spring monitoring.
41. Sent dates available for monitoring to Kate Graham and Nicola Barnes to book in all the trial monitoring for the season
42. **Meldanda** trial checked it, there are lots of grassy weeds growing but also some spear grass, salt bushes and native daisies.
43. Cryss and Brenton checked the **wicking bed trial** and topped the water up about 80 litres, there were some annual grass weeds that have started growing in one of them.



Figure 6 the super spreader



Figure 7 equipment inside super spreader

## Western Pygmy Possums

44. Copied new landholder data into folders.
45. Lou Westbrook checked his boxes and only found one huntsman
46. Peter Lee collected some possum scats from his box that had the WPP in there, the same box the eastern brown snake went into, we will keep them for when the SA Museum does their next round of genetics
47. Rowena Posted on our FB Page about the similarities with a Sugar Glider Nest

## Regent Parrots - MD Healthy Rivers Grant

48. Mid Murray Landcare SA with the Regent Parrot Recovery Team were successful with a Healthy Rivers Grant - Project Title 'Building contemporary understandings of Regent Parrot persistence within the South-Australian Murray-Darling Basin to enable improved on ground recovery actions' the project will undertake a Regent Parrot Populations Census of the River Murray from Swan Reach to the border.
49. Promotion and call out for volunteers to assist with the population census from a houseboat. Rowena Danks has been managing the registrations and assisting Chris Hedger Conservation Ecologist for DEW
50. Made enquiries for houseboats that could be available for the census
51. Healthy Rivers project meeting via teams 03/08/21 to discuss priorities for new grant, main one is securing a houseboat and making a call out for volunteers
52. Healthy Rivers project meeting via teams (both Rowena and Aimee with Mel Burford) 19/08/21 to organise details for the volunteers that will be supporting the river survey
53. Drafted up a services agreement for the coordinator of the river survey.
54. There has been a lot of administration work with this project and Rowena had over 80 volunteers register to help with the survey.