

Activity Update May 2025

This activity update is for the month of May 2025. If you would like to be on our mailing list and receive this free update, please email Aimee Linke at the above email address, or view it on our webpage. These projects are from varied sources of funding including the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board's Grassroots Grants and contract work.

Support the objectives of Mid Murray Landcare SA.

1. Managed the office, volunteers and all necessary administrations including monthly payment of bills, reports, invoicing, managing webpages and social media posts, scanned all receipts and reconciled monthly accounts in XERO.
2. Sent out monthly activity update, agenda, minutes, correspondence list, and financial report for the month to the Committee.
3. We held our monthly committee meeting at the Cambrai Community Library.

Support volunteer activities at the Cambrai Community Nursery, provide support to landholders, groups, and schools with land management projects.

4. Provided support to ten landholders or groups with site visits or project support or plant identification including preparing plants for Sophie Thomsons revegetation project near Sedan and plants for Costa's Almond orchard revegetation project near Swan Reach.
5. Volunteers have been potting on Shea-oaks and Mallee species, weeding and de-mossing. We were donated some left-over trays of plants from the Barossa Bushgarden which will help to replenish our stocks.
6. Some landholders kindly donated tree guards to help support Thomsons upcoming revegetation project.

Manage Meldanda on behalf of the Cambrai Primary School Governing Council

7. Continued with managing the volunteers, camp bookings, provision of materials and equipment and all necessary administration managing the booking page, cleaning, watered, fixing leaks. Have been working on some new signage and sign in sheets for the campsite.
8. Camp bookings - we had twenty-five camp nights for May, twenty-five adults and six children, with seven of those booking the Astronomy Paddock.
9. Provided a tour and talk at Meldanda for the Mid Murray & Mallee Aboriginal Corporation (MMAC) organised by Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board staff. We had a nice walk around Meldanda, the big old gum trees stimulated lots of interest.
10. Met with a Field Producer from Gardening Australia, showed her around the community Bushgarden at Meldanda, they are interested in a story on arid zone plants.
11. Supported a Climate Change information workshop at Meldanda for people aged over sixty-five, promoted workshop and hosted the event at Meldanda.



Figure 1 Aunty Jenni Grace and Aimee Linke photo courtesy Jem Tesoriero

Support the River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve Committee and Mid Murray Council with projects to maintain dark sky accreditation and education on the impacts of light pollution. Chris Tugwell

12. Members of our Dark Sky committee (Ken Grant, Andrew Cool, David Bennett) have been helping install the new Planewave telescope at John George's property.
13. Council Dark Sky meeting discussed business plan, new streetlights, potential new Dark Sky board, concerns re. Cambrai/Sedan truck bypass (project is open for comment at this link to Murray Mallee Regional Plan:

<https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/murray-mallee-regional-plan>.

Submissions are due by 17 June 2025.

14. Meeting with Kate Wills to discuss maintenance of website and social media pages.

Support Citizen Science projects in the region to engage landholders and volunteers in Water Watch activities, Turtle Conservation and Feral Goat projects.

15. There were thirteen sightings submitted to FeralScan for May with approximately ninety-five goats seen from Westons Flat, Quandong, to Sedan from four observers including one new contributor, one report said they were skinny.
16. Site visit with Angaston Primary School to set up a bat detector with students in their garden. It was well timed as they just got their bat report back and was discussing it in the classroom. The students had some great questions about bats and the boxes. I will visit the school later in the year so we can head back out with the inspection camera to see if any bats are using the box.
17. Email from Worlds End group who still have no possums in their boxes, they sent some nice photos through of a huntsman.
18. Dropped off bat box to Sophie Thomson and one for another landholder.
19. Collected bat detector from Mayor Simone Bailey, still to analyse the bat calls.
20. Identified Thomson bat calls and sent her a report, there was some good warm weather for bat activity in May and there was an increase in calls and species from the previous survey in March.



Figure 2 new bat box for Angaston PS.



Figure 3 Dunnart captured on camera.

21. Landholder from near Blanchetown sent photo from camera trap wondering if it was a Western Pygmy Possum or Dunnart, checked with Aly Ross from Yookamurra and she thinks it is a Dunnart, which is exciting.

Murray Darling Carpet Python Project

22. Loaned a camera to landholder near Ridley CP to set it up on a wombat warren, a Murray Darling Carpet Python has been seen at the property and may use the warren as habitat or over wintering.
23. Finished entering the habitat assessment data from site visits for this season's field work.
24. Installed the Murray Darling Carpet Python sighting information signs on the nine ferries from Lyrup to Mannum, had to go for a ride on each one to get them installed and not impact operations. Hopefully, we will get more public sightings this coming season.



Figure 4 one of the new ferry signs.

Native Grasslands Project 2023-2026 – Aimee Linke

25. Native grassland trial – met with Victoria Hefford from Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board to the visit the trial sites, to look at the style of fencing and change the SD cards in the cameras. We have had a kangaroo drag away the rocks from the Stiff stay fencing and was captured on camera grazing inside the trial site. We put more bigger rocks in the gap under the fence where it is pushing under, will see if the fencing contractor can go back and pin that section down more. It is a problem spot where the land has been contoured and is uneven.



Figure 5. Kangaroo breached fenced trial site.



Figure 6. Pulling up worn weed mat ready for new plants.

26. Seed production areas - I have been working with the volunteers to start pulling up the most worn section of the native grass side so we can replace it and do some replants this year. Volunteers have been potting on the grasses we dig up.

27. Attended a regenerative grazing workshop organised by Rowena Danks, north of Blanchetown, got to meet Colin Seis from NSW and Alejandro Carillo from Mexico presenting on the use of animals to restore grasslands by improving the health of the soil. We also looked at a demonstration site on private land where they have fenced an area and sown with native grass species. Part of the fenced area will also have some tubestock of native grasses planted that will be irrigated.



Figure 7. Rowena and some of the attendees.



Figure 8 Alejandro Carillo from Mexico presenting.