

Sept / Oct 2011

Newsletter

Where to find us - National Park & Wildlife Services Building, 68 Church St
Office Hours— Mon to Fri 9am to 5pm

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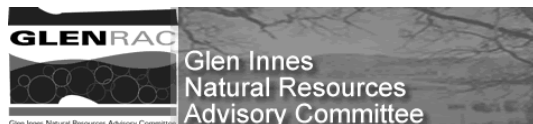
GLENRAC Annual General Meeting 2011

The GLENRAC AGM will be held on the 13th September 2011 at the Glen Innes Services Club Remembrance Room at 7:00pm.

Guest speaker will be Paul Hutchings, the General Manager of BRG-CMA.



If you would like to attend RSVP for catering would be appreciated, Phone 02 6732 3443



Tropical Grasses—what you need to know

Submitted by Carol Harris, Research Agronomist
NSW DPI Glen Innes Research Station

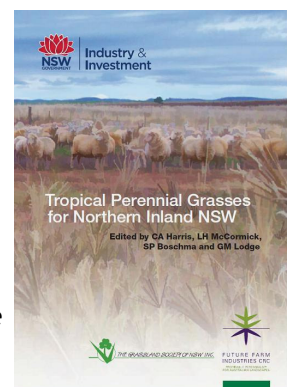
Tropical perennial grasses were first evaluated in Northern NSW in the 1950's; however, it is only over the past 10-15 years that there has been widespread interest in these grasses resulting in a rapid increase in the area sown.

This renewed interest in tropical perennial grasses has been driven by our highly variable seasons and long periods of dry conditions - conditions that the tropical grasses have persisted through in recent years.

Tropical grasses have many advantages including;

- Adapted to a wide range of environments and soil types.
- Highly responsive to summer rainfall with growth rates of up to 150 kg DM/ha/day. Surplus forage can be baled as hay, or made into silage, or carried into the winter period as dry feed.
- Persistent and productive in variable climates.
- Have higher water and nitrogen use efficiencies than temperate grasses and a greater tolerance of high temperatures.
- Have a fibrous root system improving soil structure.
- Respond to good nutrition and grazing management.
- Are useful for weed control.

Although much of the interest in tropical perennial grasses has been on the slopes and plains of Northern NSW there has also been growing interest on the Northern Tablelands and in certain areas (particularly on the western edge) are worth investigation. On the Northern Tablelands tropical perennial grasses grow during the warmest months, commencing in spring as day temperatures increase and slowing in late summer to autumn when overnight temperatures fall. Growth ceases in winter with the onset of frosts. Therefore tropical perennial grasses on the Northern Tablelands can be productive for 5-6 months of the year. If you are interested in trying tropical perennial grasses then preparation and planning is the key to success with these grasses. A book released last year by the NSW Department of Primary Industries - "Tropical Perennial Grasses for Northern Inland NSW" provides a comprehensive guide to establishing and managing tropical grass pastures. Free copies of are available from the Glen Innes NSW DPI office.



Glenrac News

Hello All,

The GLENRAC office has been once again a hive of activity with the change of financial year and my return to work. Many thanks to Mahri and Anya's hard work in my absence. GLENRAC will be hosting a number of events over the next few months and we look forward to seeing you at a field day or meeting soon.

The GLENRAC AGM will be on the 13th of September, please feel free to attend to evening to get an update on what GLENRAC has achieved in the past 12-months and hear about some plans for the future. If you would like to join the GLENRAC committee this is also your chance to become involved.

This newsletter is packed full of potential funding & training opportunities as well as useful points of interest for topics relating to natural resource management. If you would like further information on any topic please contact the GLENRAC Office and we will be able to help. *Regards, Kylie Falconer*

Coming Event! **Carbon Farming Seminar** - Hosted by Rotary Club of Glen Innes

Keep an eye out for this coming event, it will be advertised locally and through the GLENRAC E-updates. Topics to be covered will include—What's in it for farmers? What have you got to sell? How do you sell it? Expected date will be late September or early October in Glen Innes.



Bright Ideas

Carbon Farming Initiative— What does it mean?

The full detail of what the Carbon Farming Initiative will mean for the community is not yet available. But if you'd like a preview, visit www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au and read Chapter 9, about creating opportunities on the land.

Wanted: Dead or A Liver

Everyone has the opportunity to contribute to feral animal research and management by freezing rabbit carcasses and livers. The project seeks to investigate changes to the rabbit haemorrhagic disease (RHD), also known as calicivirus released in 1996.



Livers from healthy rabbits that have died from natural outbreaks of RHD in areas where the virus hasn't recently been released are needed. If you would like to help with this research contact Dr. Tania Cox at the Orange Agricultural Institute on 02 6391 3952. If you can supply rabbit livers or dead rabbits Dr. Cox can arrange delivery.



You've Got Mail

Rural Women's Network

RWN offers a free email service to update for all things relating to rural women. Email rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au to have your name added to the list.

Mann River Field Day

Shannonvale Station 22 Sept' 2011

GLENRAC will host a field day in conjunction with the Northern Rivers CMA to showcase the Upper Mann River Reach plan implementation.

The Mann River Reach project, funded by the Northern Rivers CMA has encompassed activities such as emerging weed control, fencing along the river to restrict continuous stock access, installation of off-stream watering points.

The field day will cover range of topics including -

- Mann River Reach Plan
- Identifying emerging weeds
- Project planning
- Planning water systems
- Introduction to the Native Vegetation Act



THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

Pasture Update, Glen Innes

11 October 2011

The Northern Tablelands branch of the Grassland Society of NSW will present a field day at the Glen Innes Agricultural Research Station on the 11th of October.

More information will be available on the GLENRAC website in September or contact Carol Harris on 02 6730 1900 for more information.

Do Your Own Field Trials

Submitted by Damien O'Sullivan

Every day rural producers are bombarded with the benefits of a new fertiliser or biological treatment that offers all sorts of benefits from increased crop and pasture growth to better health and production for your stock. While many of the claims may be justified there is often doubt as to whether spending your hard earned money on these products is giving you any benefits. As governments cut back on funding for independent research it is often difficult to find unbiased information on products being sold. To determine whether these products will work on your property simple field trials can help you make a decision whether a product is a worthwhile purchase for your business.

There are four steps needed to design a good field trial that will give you some results.

1. Include an untreated control site - the area selected needs to be as similar as possible to the treated site and must be managed in the same way. Select an area adjacent with the same soil, aspect and ground cover.
2. Use accurate measurements - decide what you are going to measure. Is it the increase in plant density, kgs of dry matter/ha, greener pasture, palatability for stock, or increased crop yield. Relying solely on a visual assessment can be misleading.
3. Use several trial blocks - A single trial block is easy to set up and manage but for a more accurate picture of what is happening several trial and control blocks are better. A suggested layout may be:

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	Control	Treatment 1	Treatment 2	Control
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These areas need to be well marked stakes will work but if stock are to be grazing the area. Sakes hammered to ground level may be needed. Some trials have used short lengths of garden hose buried on end to mark plots. A trial area for hand spread fertiliser could be 20 x 2 metres.

This is 1/250th of a ha. Therefore if you were applying 250kg/ha of product the test strip would need 1 kg of the product.

4. Record keeping is a must with any trial. Dates of application should be kept as well as comments on weather, rainfall, temperature and rates used as these can all affect the trial. Comments on the results need to be recorded to determine outcomes. Results from trials carried out over a number of years are more useful as this will cover a range of seasonal conditions. Working together with other interested producers can help make the trials more interesting and accurate as well as benefitting more people.

Similar trials can be done with animal treatments such as internal parasites. In this case a group of individual animals can be treated and this can be compared to an untreated group. It is important to do a range of animals not just the best or worst in a mob. Treating every second animal as they move through a crush is useful. As with pasture and crop trials accurate records must be kept. For livestock this will often be live weight change so accurate weights must be taken at least at the beginning and end of the trial.

Remember when doing the final assessment to take into account the total cost of the new treatment or management procedure. An increase in live weight gain may not be sufficient to cover the costs incurred.

There are still funds available from MLA for groups to conduct property trials under the Producer Demonstration sites.

For more information:

<http://new.dpi.vic.gov.au/notes/crops-and-pasture/fertilisers-for-pastures/ag0204-using-fertiliser-test-strips-on-pasture>

http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/41636/Field_trials.pdf

This article was published in "BeefTalk" Autumn/Winter 2011, produced by the QLD Dept. Of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation and has been reproduced with their permission.

Beware of Honey Locust

Submitted by David Nixon, Glen Innes Shire Council Weeds Officer



BACKGROUND & BIOLOGY

Honey locust was first introduced to Australia in the mid 19th century by William Macarthur at Camden Park. It was later introduced to south east Queensland in 1907.

In the past it has been deliberately promoted and planted in Australia as a fodder tree, due to its leguminous pods and as a garden ornamental.

Although beneficial in the short-term as stock feed, the long-term consequences of its growth and spread are counter-productive.

Honey locust is a long-lived fast growing tree capable of causing tremendous agricultural, environmental and social impacts in the region. It can quickly form dense thickets, smothering productive pasture.

Readily spread by water and animals, it can form dense impenetrable thickets along watercourses, roadsides and on the edges of forest areas.

Large tri-pointed spines or thorns growing from the trunk and branches are capable of inflicting substantial injuries to humans and animals. Spines can also cause significant damage to tractor, quad bike and other vehicle tyres and hence vehicle movement is substantially restricted near infestations.

Honey locust trees can grow to 125 years in age. They usually grow to 15-25m in height. Pods are first produced when the plant is 3-5 years old. They seed prolifically every 1-2 years. Trees over 12 years of age may produce in excess of 500kg of pods per tree. Seed pods are readily eaten and spread by cattle, horses, deer, rabbits and a variety of small mammals. The species suckers freely to form dense thickets.

CURRENT DISTRIBUTION IN THE REGION

One core infestation is located along the Mann River where approximately 22km of stream bank is infested with the weed. The majority of the infestation is located in the Glen Innes Severn Council region at Wyaliba where it was introduced as a cattle fodder tree over 40 years ago. The Wyaliba Landcare group has been controlling the infestation using chemical and mechanical techniques for several years. National Parks and Wildlife Service have also implemented control programs in the adjoining Guy Fawkes River National Park.

ECOLOGICAL ISSUES

Great care is required in controlling infestations in riparian zones, wetlands and other significant environments in order to minimise any adverse environmental impacts such as off-target damage to native plants and aquatic fauna species such as frogs from herbicides.

CONTROL MEASURES

The best approach is usually to combine different control methods. These may include chemical and mechanical control methods combined with land management practices. The control methods chosen should suit your particular situation.



Picture—Note the distinctive spines of the honey locust tree. Source— Office of Environment & Waters, NPWS.



Picture—The seed of the honey locust tree
Source— Clarence Valley Council

For more information on identifying or controlling honey locust plants contact David Nixon at Glen Innes Severn Council on 02 6730 2358.





Book Review

Border Rivers Gwydir CMA Open New Office in Glen Innes

Weed Control on Small Farms (2010) A new booklet produced by the University of New England. It covers all you need to know about weeds on a small holding. A useful free resource, copies available from GLENRAC or Glen Innes Severn Council.

Planting for Wildlife (2011) A practical guide to restoring native woodlands This new book provides the latest information on restoring woodlands, with particular emphasis on planting as habitat for wildlife. Key topics include where to plant, how to prepare a site, how to maintain and manage plantings. Published by CSIRO, 96 pages \$39.95.

Living with snakes and other reptiles (2011) Provides a layperson's account of why these creatures behave the way they do and what makes people get into trouble. Published by CSIRO, 160 pages, \$29.95.

Horse Management on Small Properties (2008) Compiled by the Condamine Catchment Landcare groups in association with well-know equine author Jane Meyers this short book covers a range of topics for horse owners, including grazing management. 47 pages. GLENRAC has a limited number for sale for \$6.50 per copy. If you would like to order a copy please contact the office.

NSW Rural Women's Gathering, Gloucester 14 -16 October 2011

The Annual Rural Women's Gathering will this year be hosted by Gloucester. The three day program will cover a huge range of workshops, tours and forums. The Rural Women's Network have 5 complementary registration and home stay packages available for those who are experiencing hardship and/or who have never been to a gathering. The program and registration is now available on-line from www.gloucester-womensgathering.com



GLENRAC would like to welcome BRG CMA staff members Jonathon Lawson and Sheridan Lawson who have moved from the Moree office of the BRG-CMA to a new office location in Glen Innes. The Glen Innes office is located at the NPWS building at 68 Church St.

Jonathan is the Invasive Species Officer and can provide support with all things relating to weeds and feral animals. Sheridan is one of the Property Vegetation Planning officers and can provide advice on plant identification and any legal requirements surrounding the *Native Vegetation Act*.



Northern Rivers CMA Catchment Action Plan Review

The Northern Rivers Catchment Action Plan (CAP) will soon be updated. The Northern Rivers community is invited to participate in the planning process and help to develop the new CAP that will set the new direction for Natural Resources Management.

The CAP provided strategic direction for local, State and Federal funding of regional NRM activities. The Northern Rivers CMA, and other organisations, use the CAP to prioritise annual NRM investment programs. This funding supports landholders, community groups, Indigenous land managers, industry, business and government to undertake activities that contribute to the objectives and targets of the CAP.

Visit www.northern.cma.nsw.gov.au/region_catchment_action_plan.php for more information.



New Resources for Farmers

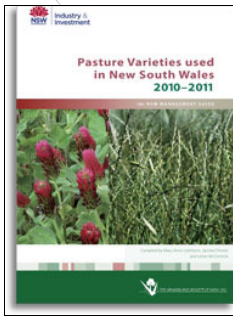
A Guide to Communication for Farm Families

This guide looks at the importance of effective communication and building communication skills among family members and their advisers. The guide provides families with real life examples of the challenges and outcomes facing a family business, drawing on family structures and plans emanating from family meetings. It provides tools to put into practise to enhance communication.

Published by GRDC, the guide is free plus \$10 P&H. Phone 1800 110 044 for a copy.

New! Quad Bike Rider Guide

Visit the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health & Safety to view their new policy statement in relation to roll over protection devices for quad bikes and to download their updated guide. *Safe use of quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles on Australian farms*, www.aghealth.org.au



Pasture Varieties used in NSW 2010-11

A new joint publication by NSW Dept. of Primary Industries & Grasslands Society of NSW, available on-line for download from www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

Grant Seeker Manual

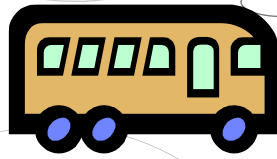
The Grant Seeker Manual is a starter kit to introduce you to the basics of grant seeking. It will help you to research potential funders; make sure you've planned your project well; communicate with potential funders; and write a good grant application. The manual can be downloaded free from www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/grantseekersmanualfinal.pdf

Bush Fire Survival Plan

Bush fires are a natural part of the environment and occur regularly, but many people fail to prepare for them. Ensure you, your family and your home are kept safe by downloading the free Bush Fire Survival Plan from the NSW Rural Fire Service website:

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/file_system/attachments/Attachment_BushFireSurvivalPlan.pdf

Ben Lomond Soils—On Tour Submitted by Beth White



With an early morning start, members of the Ben Lomond Landcare Soils group bussed to Lismore to visit two soil testing laboratories. The current soils project is testing individual soils through two different labs - EAL and Soil Food Web. The test results have been discussed in relation to soil carbon, soil type, compaction, conductivity, management history and future prospects for individual parcels of land.

The purpose of this excursion was to examine the techniques and procedures of the soil testing environment. An opportunity arose to seek reassurances about the benchmarks for each test run and the capacity to store and retest individual samples if required. We saw the lab setups, the equipment used and heard about techniques and ratios. We viewed a fungi sample through the microscope and saw a controlled soils, compost experiment. Complex equipment was explained and individual results were subject to scrutiny, interpretation and discussion.

This excursion expanded the understanding of what different labs can offer and helped these graziers develop an understanding of the complex sets of data from each soil test undertaken. It revealed the importance of appropriate equipment and the difficulty for a business within an institution such as the University, to access 'cutting edge technology.'



Picture—Ben Lomond soils group visiting Environmental Analysis Lab in Lismore

This project has been funded through the Australian Governments Community Action Grants



Funding & Training Opportunities



Fish Habitat Action Grants

The NSW Government (Primary Industries) is offering small grants of up to \$1,000 (GST Ex.) to individuals, fishing clubs, community groups or local councils interested in rehabilitating fish habitats in NSW.

For project ideas and application guidelines and forms look up www.dpi.nsw.gov.au go to "Fishing and Aquaculture" and search for "Habitat Action Grants". Applications close on 28 September 2011.

Be Natural Landcare Grants

Just opened, the Be Natural Landcare grants will provide up to \$5,000 to 25 local groups across Australia to help with projects which have not received funding in the last 12-months. Through the grants program groups will also be encouraged to find innovative ways of attracting more volunteers to their groups and projects.

Applications close on the 10th October. For grant guidelines and application forms visit www.landcareonline.com



Teachers Environment Fund

The Teachers Credit Union are offering grants of up to \$5,000 to public schools and TAFES in NSW, ACT, NT & WA for environmental projects. Projects need to focus on water and energy saving; composting and recycling; tree planting and biodiversity. Schools will need a School Environmental Management Plan to accompany applications.

Applications close on 16th September 2011. Visit www.teacherscreditunion.com.au for grant application forms.



Junior Landcare Watermelon Challenge

The Watermelon Challenge is on again! A free packet of watermelon seeds will be sent to everyone who registers on the challenge website by the 25th September. The challenge is open to all children aged under 16 years and living in Australia. Visit www.juniorlandcarechallenge.com.au for more info.

PROFARM SHORT COURSES 2011

NSW Dept. Of Primary Industries offer a range of short courses through the PROFARM program. Upcoming courses to be held in Glen Innes include

- Beef Spec Calculator 12 October;
- Safe Tractor Operation 19 & 20 October;
- Chainsaw—Trim & Cut felled trees 24 & 25 October;
- Chainsaw—Fall trees manually 26 & 27 October at Mount Mitchell;
- Working Dogs—Bill Davidson 26 & 27 November

For enquiries or to register phone Cassie Gardiner in Tamworth on 02 6763 1276.

Private Native Forestry Training

The Department of Primary Industries, with support from DECCW are holding field days across NSW to outline the opportunities and regulatory obligations of for private native forestry (PNF) management of farms. This practical field day covers five key topics with practical demonstrations and hands on experience. The five key topics to be covered are -

- Understanding your forest
- Introduction to the PNF approval process
- Measuring your forest
- Harvesting and managing your forest
- Making it pay

The field day is free for participants.

Can we get a field day to run in Glen Innes?

If you are interested in attending a PNF field day let the GLENRAC office know and we can get a day organised locally.

NEW 1080 & Pindone Course

New England LHPA will be offering a new short course for landholders to enable them to use 1080 and Pindone on their properties. All LHPA's across NSW are now offering a three-hour course to give landholders a clear understating of 1080 and Pindone use and their legal obligations. Those completing the course will be issued a certification car and will remain accredited to use 1080 and Pindone for five years. A fee of \$44 per person will be charged for the course.

Any landholder interested in attending the training course should contact the NE LHPA to register their interest, 02 6732 1200.



GLENRAC OPERATING COMMITTEE 2010 /2011

CHAIRMAN - Jim Benton

TREASURER - Peter Smith

SECRETARY - Dr Eric Sinclair

LANDHOLDER & DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES:

North Eastern : Greg Chappell South Eastern : Tony Hollis, Southern: Winsome Quilty;

Northern: Mark Pietsch ; Western : Brian Winter

Glen Innes Severn Council : Graham Price, Department of Primary Industries : Jeff Lowien,

National Parks & Wildlife Office: Peter Croft Rural Lands Protection Board : Rob Munro,

Glen Innes Local Aboriginal Lands Council: Karen Potter

For all questions relating to funding and funding applications, contact

GLENRAC OFFICE 68 Church Street (PO Box 660) GLEN INNES NSW 2370

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website: www.glenrac.org.au

GLENRAC
PO Box 660
GLEN INNES
NSW 2370



To the LAND Owner



Coming Events:

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|---------------|--|
| 5-7 September | NSW State Landcare Forum & Landcare Awards, Parkes |
| 13 September | GLENRAC Annual General Meeting, Remembrance Room 7:00pm |
| 22 September | GLENRAC / Northern Rivers CMA Mann River Field Day |
| 5 October | Biological Farmers Assoc. Road Show, Guest Speaker Gary Zimmer USA
to be held in Stanthorpe, www.bfa.com.au |
| 11 October | NSW Grasslands Pasture Update, Glen Innes Ph. 02 6739 1900 |
| 14-16 October | NSW Rural Women's Gathering: Friendship & Dreaming Beneath the
Buckett's Phone 02 6558 1995 |

