GLENRAC Newsletter

JUL/AUG 2014

Where to find us - National Park & Wildlife Services Building, 68 Church St
Office Hours— Mon to Fri 8:30am to 4:30pm

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** DATE CLAIMER **

GRASSLANDS SOCIETY 2014 CONFERENCE
22-24th July 2014 Inverell

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS & ADAPTATION WORKSHOP 2014
23rd July—Glen Innes

GLENRAC Glen Innes Natural Resources Advisory Committee

NSW GOVERNMENT Local Land Services Northern Tablelands

CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY

GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL

Funding for Glenrac from the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services

GLENRAC (Glen Innes Natural Resources Advisory Committee) will be able to retain its Landcare Coordinator for another six months thanks to its successful application for funding from the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services (LLS).

Since the reorganisation of catchment management authorities (CMAs), Livestock Health and Pest Authority and parts of the Department of Primary Industries under the LLS umbrella, Glenrac received funding from Northern Tablelands LLS for the position last financial year, and is now set to receive sufficient funding for the balance of 2014. The position was formerly funded collectively by the Northern Rivers and Border Rivers Gwydir CMAs.

This extension of the contract will ensure Glenrac's doors remain open, and that the Landcare network can continue to provide services to the community. Glenrac's mission statement is 'to provide coordination and the effective management of the productive, environmental and social resource base of the Glen Innes district'.

Glenrac offers free membership to any individual, family or business interested in natural resource management. Members receive regular newsletters and event notices, access to publications, education and training opportunities, access to funding opportunities and assistance with completing funding applications.

As a member, landholders have the opportunity to work with Glenrac staff to influence the direction of future projects, which could benefit their business and community.

GLENRAC's objectives are to work with landholders in the district to increase the effectiveness of their natural resource management, implement sustainable farming practices, manage weed and pest animals, increase native vegetation, improve soil structure and increase fertility, improve grazing management, decrease soil erosion, and to ultimately increase catchment health.

Glenrac staff and management committee acknowledged the contribution of the Northern Tablelands LLS for its continued investment in Glenrac and Landcare.

"Glenrac is very pleased to be partnering with the Northern LLS to continue the previous 25 years of providing natural resource management services and education to the Glen Innes district"

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GLENRAC News

Hello everyone,

Glenrac is currently in the middle of some staff changes. Kylie will be returning from maternity leave and will be working two days per week. We are very excited to see her back, and are sure that you will share that feeling.

Tanya will assist GLENRAC on a casual basis whilst Lucy will be continuing two days a week. Pamela will continue to work part time where needed.

Thanks for all your support over the last 12 months.

Tanya, Lucy and Pamela.

GLENRAC PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Ben Lomond Community Empowerment

The 28th of May saw the Ben Lomond Hall come alive with enthusiasm from the attendees at "Network, Negotiate and Communicate". Principle Focus trainer Richard Groom had participants learning new skills to improve communication, from language use and tone of voice, to eye movement and body language.

Moving through everyday skills like effective listening and remembering, the group also studied ways in which to better understand other peoples' needs. Participants also worked though practical examples and scenarios to exercise their new skills and to learn to recognise audio and visual cues that can be keys to understanding what's not being said.

Attendees will continue to receive individual emails from Richard Groom for the eight weeks following the workshop. These reiterate a specific skill set that was covered in the workshop, and challenge participants to implement those skills during the week.

This project also includes four follow-up days for participants, which will continue to explore the new skills and techniques learned. Dates for these are to be advised.

Soil Solutions

Following on from the "Soil testing methods" workshops, the final courses have been held for Soil Solutions. Two workshops entitled "How to interpret soil tests" were run by Jeff Lowien at the New England Club, with excellent feedback from all attendees.

Participants received a soil sample from their own property as a part of the course, and during the day were able to discuss and compare their results. It was great to see some enthusiastic new faces at these workshops. Thanksto Paul and Katie Julian, and to Mick Paterson for hosting us during the first two workshops.

This project also included funds to purchase some resources to be donated to the Glen Severn Library. The books selected are *The Australian Soil Fertility Manual* and *Interpreting Soil Test Results*. Both books are great resources if you want to understand more about soils, and gain more from your soil tests. They are both be available to borrow from the library, and there are reviews and more details on page 6 of this newsletter.

GPS

GLENRAC has Magellan GPS units that are available for members to borrow, free of charge. They are easy to use units that can be used for mapping farm features such as water points, fence lines or weeds. They can also be used to check features of a point like altitude. If you are interested please call GLENRAC on 6732 3443.

GLENRAC PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Pest Animals

Pig baiting is drawing to a close, with many landholders taking the opportunity to use free corn in the fight against feral animals. We are receiving feedback that this approach is giving good results.

Honey Locust Control

The Honey Locust Control project concluded on 30 June 2014. This project ran for three years and control works were carried out on over 60 properties. The project was funded by the Federal Government Biodiversity Fund, with some contribution from Northern Tablelands Local Land Services and Crown Lands. Final reporting requirements are now being submitted including recommendations on future control works. Mapping data produced through this project has also been shared with relevant stakeholders including Office of Environment and Heritage, LLS and local councils.

Riparian Restoration

This project is funded through the Northern Tablelands LLS and has been extended into this financial year. On ground works will continue in the coming months. Participating properties include sections of the Beardy Waters, Deepwater River, Swan Brook as well as tributaries of the Mann and Henry Rivers.

GIS—Mapping

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Measure To Manage

GLENRAC has recently held the final workshop of a Measure to Manage course. The aim of the workshop series was to give farmers and graziers the framework and systems to measure and monitor soils and pastures to make better farm input decisions and maximise farm returns.

Bart Davidson, SystemAg covered topics such as goal setting to identify the targets for production; stocktake of current management practises and the status of the soils, plants and animals; strategy and planning to identify shortfalls in production; implementation and the tools & processes needed to achieve the outcomes; measuring the results to identify the benefits; review and revision of actions taken historically to re-position going forward.

Participants learnt how benchmarking changes in your soil health and fertility, helps landholders work out where the gaps are in crop and pasture production… using data from their own farm.

Following workshops focused on using data from landholders own farms including analysing soil test results and developing a soil and plant nutritional management plan for their own paddocks and/or farm. This Project was sponsored by Landcare Australia.

Tom Faithfull, Peter Brummel, Kylie falconer, Bart Davidson, Dereck Smith, Samara Alexander and Bettina Lynn working on their businesses at the final Measure to Manage workshop

Identifying Fireweed (*Senicio madagascariensis)*

Submitted by David Nixon, Glen Innes Severn Council Weeds Officer

Fireweed was added to the Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) list of Australia in April 2012.

Identification - Fireweed is a daisy-like plant that grows from 10 to 60 cm high. It has a variable growth habit and leaf structure, but the most common form of fireweed is a low, heavily branched, annual or shortlived perennial plant.

Leaves - Generally bright green in colour, fleshy and narrow, leaves are 2–7 cm long, alternately arranged on the stem, and have serrated, entire or lobed margins. Broader leaves usually clasp around the stem.

Flowers - Small, yellow and daisy-like, flowers are 1–2 cm in diameter and arranged in clusters at the end of each branch. They can number from 0 to 200 per plant, and each flower will commonly have 13 petals and 21 bracts forming the 'cup' under the flower.

Distribution and habitat - Fireweed is largely restricted to the south-eastern coast of Australia and has established along the entire NSW coast. First recorded in the Hunter Valley in 1918, it has spread south into Victoria and occurs as far north as central Queensland. It also occurs on the northern and southern tablelands of NSW and as isolated infestations in parts of inland NSW.

Fireweed does not grow well in shaded areas, preferring open country and areas of bare soil. It will quickly invade roadsides, pastures and open forests, and heavy infestations are common on cultivated or disturbed land.

Lifecycle - Under favourable seasonal conditions, some plants may behave as a short-lived perennials surviving for 3 years. However, the majority of plants only live for one season. Plants grow quickly and can produce flowers 6–10 weeks after emergence, with flowering occurring mainly in spring.

Fireweed seeds profusely, with each flower producing between 50 and 120 seeds of high viability. One plant is capable of producing 5 000 to 30 000 seeds in one season depending on conditions. Most seed germinates quickly, but about 15% of seed has a high level of dormancy.

Spread - The light fluffy seeds of fireweed are easily spread by wind. This is the main method of local spread. Most seed will fall within 5 metres of the parent plant but can be spread to greater distances. Various means of spread include: livestock; clothing, vehicles and machinery; and contaminated hay, silage and grain products; as well as spread by wild and feral animals.

Livestock poisoning - Fireweed contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids that are toxic to livestock and cause liver damage. Young, hungry or new stock not previously exposed to fireweed are the most at risk of poisoning.

All parts of the plant at all stages of growth are toxic. Hay, silage or grain that is contaminated with fireweed plants or their seeds can also be toxic.

Symptoms of pyrrolizidine alkaloid poisoning include: loss of condition; poor growth rates; weakness; abdominal straining; and chronic scouring.

Sudden deaths can occur in fat animals that are no longer grazing fireweed-infested pasture but have grazed them in the previous 3 to 6 months.

Management and Control - Management should include a variety of methods to ensure the best control of fireweed is achieved. For grazing enterprises, management includes grazing strategies, fertiliser application at appropriate times, upgrading pastures, and strategic herbicide applictions; For environmental areas, hand-pulling individual plants and using spot spraying for herbicide application may be more acceptable.

Whatever the situation, once established, fireweed is extremely difficult to eradicate. Therefore follow-up treatment is essential for control to be successful.

Prevention and early detection - Early detection is vital to prevent fireweed becoming established. Once fireweed is detected, it is important to act immediately to prevent the problem from becoming worse. A dense pasture cover will prevent fireweed from invading.

Pasture management - For successful fireweed control in the long term, it is essential to maintain a vigorous perennial pasture, using fertiliser applications on existing improved or native pastures and matching grazing pressure to pasture growth to maintain a dense pasture.

Chemical control in pastures - Herbicides are a safe and effective method of control as part of an integrated fireweed management plan. Use of herbicides does not stop the need to maintain or establish a competitive pasture. There is a range of herbicides registered for fireweed control. Bromoxynil herbicides cause less damage to pasture legumes but are only effective against fireweed seedlings and immature plants.

Herbicides that cause more damage to pasture legumes have a longer application window and can be applied in spring if necessary. These herbicides include Grazon® Extra and metsulfuron-methyl.

Cultivation - For arable areas, cultivation followed by a cropping program with a forage cereal such as oats can be effective as part of a pasture improvement program. Cultivation in March and April can stimulate a large proportion of the seedbank to germinate. These seedlings are then controlled with a knockdown herbicide or further cultivation before sowing. (Avoid over-cultivation, which increases the risk of erosion.) Consult an agronomist for further advice before using this method to control fireweed.

Slashing/mulching - Repeated cutting, typically at less than six week intervals, can reduce fireweed production and seeding. However, while it controls fireweed, this technique is also damaging to the pasture, and should only be considered where the pasture will rapidly recover and outcompete any seedlings.

For more information on weeds identification and control methods contact David Nixon, Weeds Officer at Glen Innes Severn Council on 0427669871 or landline 02 6730 2358 during office hours.

Grasslands Society NSW 2014 Conference

The Grassland Society of NSW was formed in March 1985, and to date has over 500 members, most of whom are farmers and graziers. The society has a major focus on transfer of information and technology relevant to pasture, grazing and land management. The aims of the Grassland Society are to advance the investigation of problems affecting grassland husbandry and to encourage the adoption into practice of results of research and practical experience.

Inverell is hosting the 2014 conference on the 22-24th July at the RSM. There is an impressive line up of speakers covering a variety of topics, including a number of local producer speakers and panel members. More information will be available in the coming weeks: see http://grasslandnsw.com.au/news/2014/2014-conference/

Grazing increases species diversity study through allowing more light...

An international grazing experiment replicated at 40 grassland sites on six continents found that fertiliser reduced the number of plant species because species less able to tolerate a lack of light were literally overshadowed by fast-growing neighbours.
However, on both fertilised and unfertilised plots, removal of vegetation by herbivores increased the amount of light that struck the ground, and increased plant species diversity. These results held true for all locations and all grazing species. For more information on this interesting study, see the Nature Journal website:
http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nature13144.html

Landcare Gateway

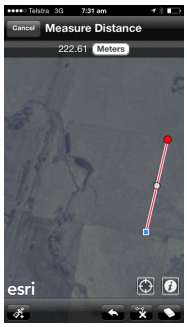
Are you looking for information on a Landcare group? Would your local group like to have a website? Then NSW Landcare Gateway is for you!

Groups can list their contact details, current projects, past projects and upload photos! The website also has an impressive selection of resources, such as fact sheets, policy templates and the Landcare Insurance Toolkit.

To explore the site yourself, visit www.landcare.nsw.gov.au

National soil strategy launched

Australia now has a national soil strategy to identify, coordinate and address national soil priorities across industries. The strategy wants to ensure that Australian farmers can manage their soil to produce more with less land, water, and inputs, while contending with a changing climate.
Amongst others, one of the goals of the strategy is to ensure that soil research becomes more targeted and collaborative, and that research will better meet the needs of farmers. For more details, see:
http://www.daff.gov.au/natural-resources/soils/national_soil_rd_and_e_strategy



Arc GIS

ArcGIS is a free phone app and is a great way to discover and use maps. You can use it to explore and navigate maps, find places and collect, edit and update features. You can use tools to search identify measure and query features. You could use this app on your phone or tablet to calculate the area of a new paddock or measure the distance of a new fenceline.

A Cuppa With...Nikki Thompson

Want to know more about your own personal power and how you can ignite your own unique potential? The session will give you some insights into how easily the social brain can be threatened and some tips on how you can create more happiness by befriending your big, beautiful social brain.
Thursday 10th July 2014. 7.15 for a 7.30 pm AEST start.
FREE webinar.
Email projects@nrwc.com.au to register and download the program.

Rabbit biocontrol

Biological control of the rabbit population is saving Australian agriculture over $1 billion every year according to a new report from the Invasive Animals CRC.
http://www.feral.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2014/03/RabbitBiocontrol.pdf

BOOK REVIEW

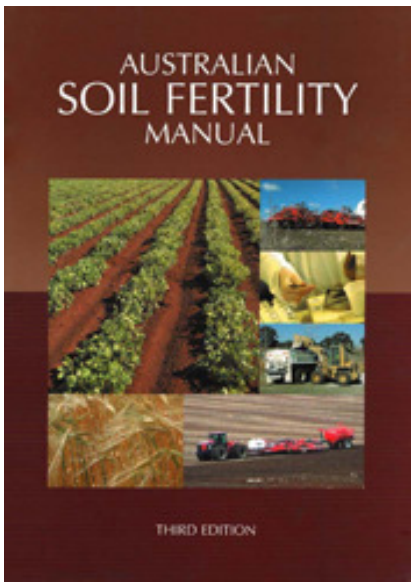
AUSTRALIAN SOIL FERTILITY MANUAL

Third Edition. Edited by FIFA (Fertiliser Industry Federation of Australia), CSIRO Publishing, 2006. $74.95.

The *Australian Soil Fertility Manual* is a trusted guide to the safe use and handling of fertilisers. It describes the types of agricultural soils, how they are classified and the interaction of soil, water and nutrients. It also provides an insight into how plants utilise nutrients and the role that individual nutrients play in the process of plant growth.

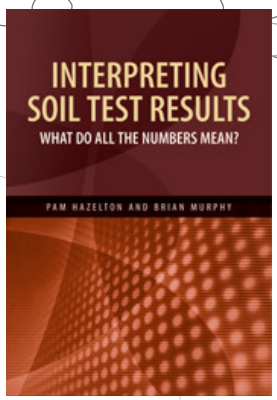
This edition has been revised to reflect an increased emphasis on the environmental fate of nutrients and appropriate management strategies. It also has additional information on soil physical, chemical, and biological properties and discussions on the use of lime, dolomite and gypsum.

New content covers liming effectiveness, nitrogen water use efficiency, regulations for handling and using fertilizers, storage and transport of security sensitive ammonium nitrate, budgeting for profitable nitrogen use and best management practice for nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizers. The chapters on potassium; calcium, magnesium and sulfur; plant nutrients and the environment; and heavy metal in fertilizers and agriculture have all been extensively revised and rewritten.



INTERPRETING SOIL TESTS

Pam Hazelton and Brian Murphy, CSIRO Publishing 2007. $64.95.



Interpreting Soil Tests is a practical reference for those who need to interpret results from a laboratory analysis of soil. It has a comprehensive listing of the soil properties relevant to most environmental and natural land resource issues and investigations.
The precursor to this book, *What Do All The Numbers Mean?,* known as *The Numbers Book*, was widely used and accepted for interpreting soil test results. This new edition has been completely updated and many sections have been expanded, particularly those on acid soils and soil salinity. It is a handy and straightforward guide to interpretation of the number associated with a wide range of soil tests.

GLENRAC has donated these two soil books to the library

BEEF CATTLE PRODUCTION AND TRADE

David Cottle and Lewis Kahn, CSIRO Publishing, 2014. $140.

Beef Cattle Production and Trade covers all aspects of the beef industry from paddock to plate. It is an international text with an emphasis on Australian beef production, written by experts in the field.

The book begins with an overview of the historical evolution of world beef consumption and introductory chapters on carcass and meat quality, market preparation and world beef production. North America, Brazil, China, South-East Asia and Japan are discussed in separate chapters, followed by Australian beef production, including feed lotting and live export.

The remaining chapters summarise R&D, emphasising the Australian experience, and look at different production systems and aspects of animal husbandry such as health, reproduction, grazing, feeding and finishing, genetics and breeding, production efficiency, environmental management and business management. The final chapter examines various case studies in northern and southern Australia.

Funding & Training Opportunities

Drought Concessional Loans Scheme

Under the Drought Concessional Loans Scheme, $280 million will be allocated over the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years for the provision of concessional loans. The assistance available under the scheme is targeted to those farm businesses that have a financial need as a direct result of drought conditions, but are viable in the longer term. Drought Concessional Loans will be available for the following purposes:

- **Debt restructuring:**
- **Operating expenses:**
- **Drought recovery and preparedness activities:**

Loans of up to $1 million, or 50 per cent of the farm business's debt, whichever is lower, will be available. A drought concessional loan will have a loan term of five years, with a concessional interest rate period of five years.

For more information, please see the Rural Assistance Authority website http://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/farm-finance-package

or the Department of Agriculture website http://www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/drought/assistance/concessional-loans

Climate Change Impacts & Adaptation Workshop 2014

Interpreting climate modelling projections *Using climate projections information to plan on-farm activities *Risk Assessment and Adaptation Matrix . Dr. Allyson Williams (*International Centre for Applied Climate Science*)

- Armidale - Tuesday 22nd July 2pm-5pm (City Bowling Club)
- Glen Innes - Wednesday 23rd July - 2pm to 5pm (Glen Innes RSL Club)
- Inverell - Thursday 24th July - 5pm to 8pm (Inverell RSM Club)
- Tenterfield - Friday 25th July - 2pm to 5pm (Tenterfield Golf Club)

Light refreshments provided. RSVP Tuesday 15th July Vicky Wong on (02)67288036 or email vicky.wong@lls.nsw.gov.au OR Wendy Miller on (02) 6728 8039 or email wendy.miller@lls.nsw.gov.au

WORKCOVER FREE ADVISORY SERVICES FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Small businesses can receive up to $500 to help their small business be smarter and safer through the Small Business Rebate program. It is open to small businesses or sole traders with up to 50 full time employees or equivalent.

Attend any eligible WorkCover safety event, live webinar, workshop, program, or have a free assistance visit. Read more at: http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/newlegislation2012/assistance-and-support/Assistance-visits/Pages/default.aspx or contact Workcover on 13 10 50

AngliCare Family and Drought Support

A component of the drought assistance package announced in February 2014, the federal government pledged $10.7 million to increase social and mental health services. This includes free, professional help, including one-on-one counselling, family support services and referrals for drought affected farmers, farming families and rural communities.

AngliCare Northern Inland is delivering these services in the Northern Tablelands, slopes and plains. They provide counselling for individuals, couples, families, adolescents and children, and offer this at home, at the workplace or at a local venue. They also offer referrals to government services, non-government services, financial counselling, health services, mental health services, emergency relief and community support.

AngliCare offers life skills courses in conflict resolution, well-being, anger management, pastoral care and step-parenting, and can provide support through depression, grief and loss, separation, trauma abuse, stress and anxiety.

Contact 0407 005 100, the Glen Innes office on 6722 2766, or the regional office on 1300 549 577 or (02) 6701 8200.

GLENRAC OPERATING COMMITTEE 2014

CHAIRMAN - John Bavea **VICE CHAIRMAN** - Jim Benton

TREASURER - Sam Baker **SECRETARY** - Jeff Lowien

LANDHOLDER & DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES:

Greg Chappell, Tony Holliss, Carol Harris, Winsome Quilty, Mark Pietsch, Sam Baker, Mike Norton, Norman Whitaker

Glen Innes Severn Council : Graham Price & Col Price & Ian Trow

National Parks & Wildlife Office: Peter Croft

New England Livestock Health & Pest Authority: Rob Munro

Glen Innes Local Aboriginal Lands Council: Karen Potter

Public Officer: John Brien

For all questions relating to GLENRAC please contact our staff at -

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email: glenrac@glenrac.org.au website: www.glenrac.org.au

GLENRAC
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To The Land Manager

GLENRAC
Glen Innes Natural Resources Advisory Committee

Coming Events:

22-24 July	Grassland Society Conference 2014—Inverell
23rd July	Climate Change Impacts & Adaptation Workshop 2014—Glen Innes

NSW GOVERNMENT Local Land Services Northern Tablelands

CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY