

6th Creek Catchment Group Newsletter

Winter 2004

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6th Creek Website

Thanks to Richard Wallace of Summertown, we now have our very own website up and running!

If you're looking for information on biodiversity, water, fire, courses & links to other organisations, then jump online and explore!
www.sixthcreek.com

NEWS FROM THE PROJECT

Our main development to report is that the Sixth Creek Catchment Project has been assured of continuing funding for 2005.

In February 2004, we were part of a joint bid for funds in Area B (Torrens & Patawalonga catchments), of the Mount Lofty Ranges & Greater Adelaide Integrated Natural Resource Management Region of South Australia.

Funding is derived from the Natural Heritage Trust and the National Action Plan for Salinity & Water Quality from both federal and state governments.

Area B funding was collectively sought for activities for water

quality, salinity, biodiversity conservation and coastal protection issues.

Only a small component of Area B funding has been granted for biodiversity protection for 2005, which is our main project activity (with important spin-offs in water quality & fire hazard reduction).

Consequently, the Torrens Catchment Water Management Board has stepped in as our major funder for 2005. We are already working closely with the TCWMB's riparian projects and so we see the prospect of further links as a positive development for our project.

COMING EVENTS

AUGUST	1	Biodiversity Day - "Bandicoot & small bird Habitat", Cleland
	16-22	National Landcare Week
	21&22	Short Course "Monitoring your Bushland Condition", Lobethal
SEPT	7	National Threatened Species Day
	22&29	Short Course "Understanding your Local Vegetation"
OCT	6&13	Short Course "Understanding your Local Vegetation"
	21&28	"Knowing, Growing & Encouraging Native Grasses on your Property"
	24	Biodiversity Day - "Bandicoot, Wren & Scrubwren habitat & Aquatic Invertebrates", Woorabinda

To enrol in any of these short courses or Biodiversity Days, contact
Trees for Life on 8372 0150



Three Commonly Used Chemicals for General Property Management

**Do you have a problem with invasive weeds degrading a grazing paddock?
Are woody weeds and feral bulbs destroying a native understorey or
building up a fire hazard?**

In our last newsletter, we described some useful techniques for applying chemicals in delicate situations (ring the Adelaide Hills Natural Resource Centre if you do not have a copy). Below, we describe three of the most useful, generally available chemicals to help solve your weed problems. REMEMBER though, to always read the chemical labels first, seek some good advice from your local Animal & Plant Control Board for your situation, use sprays under correct conditions to avoid off-target damage and wear a spray mask and protective clothing. Always apply chemical during periods of active plant growth.

Glyphosate

Most widely recognised under the trade name “Round-up”, this chemical is now also available under other trade names by manufacturers.

Glyphosate is a **non-selective herbicide** and is most commonly used for general garden or agricultural use, where a general kill of both broad-leafed weeds and grass is wanted. Both annual grasses and perennial grasses can be killed with glyphosate (if only weedy annual grasses are a problem, try a chemical specifically for annuals only).



Many native grasses in particular are useful for holding the soil without the sort of rank growth that creates a fire hazard, so think carefully before you use a non-selective chemical. Bare ground can also provide a ready seedbed for new invasive weeds, so don't get into a cycle of weed problems by overzealous use of this chemical. Low-growing desirable plants can be protected by newspaper or an upturned flower pot when spraying (see photo at left).

PHOTO: Protecting native grass while spraying

Glyphosate can be mixed with residual weed control chemicals for longer-term effect, but this adds to chemical use in the environment. Catching weeds before they seed down can help reduce or eliminate recurrent problems, however.

Glyphosate is also a very useful chemical for a variety of “cut and paint” applications to woody weeds (see last newsletter). It is de-activated by contact with the soil, however, so don't put a dirty brush into your storage container.

Triclopyr

This type of chemical is widely available under the trade name “Garlon 600”. Triclopyr is the most commonly used chemical for woody weeds, including Montpellier broom, English broom, gorse and blackberry. Applied at the correct rate **it will not affect grasses**.

A grazing paddock or a native grassy understorey will therefore stay intact and relatively safe from further weed invasions that bare ground invites.

When woody weeds are mixed with desirable plants, try careful spot spraying at low pressure protecting the useful plants with a cover, or resort to “cut and paint”.

Triclopyr can be mixed with diesel (1:30 for Garlon 600) for a “cut and paint” application, especially for woody plants that are inclined to sucker eg. *Erica arborea*.

This treatment can also be particularly useful for *Erica* in that mature plants of this species do not respond well to spraying.

A most important thing to remember with Triclopyr, however, is that it can cause off-target damage to sensitive plants if sprayed under the wrong conditions. Vines, fruit trees, tomatoes and ornamentals, for example are susceptible. Contact your local Animal & Plant Control Board for advice.



PHOTO: Large infestation of broom invading understory.

Triclopyr can be a more expensive chemical to purchase than Glyphosate, but a little goes a long way in chemical mixes. For a residual effect, other related chemical mixes are available (eg. Grazon), but balance the issue of frequency of spraying follow-up with the number of chemicals in the environment.

Metsulfuron Methyl

Commonly sold as “Brush-Off”, this can be a very useful chemical for treating weeds with a bulb, tuber, rhizome or some species of woody weeds (eg. three cornered garlic, soursob, salvation jane, bridal creeper, blackberry or boneseed).

It is always used with a surfactant or wetting agent, for better application to plant leaf surfaces (“Pulse” is the most useful surfactant). As with all chemicals, metsulfuron methyl needs to be used with caution. Although of low toxicity to humans, it can last in the soil for some weeks after spraying and it can damage the roots of desirable plants.

Always consider the potential for non-chemical solutions for your situation, or for the most controlled method of chemical application.



PHOTO: Three cornered garlic invading understory



PHOTO: Three cornered garlic

If a weed is worth your time and effort, the effort is saved in the long-run if you aim to eradicate the problem. This makes it a good idea to catch weeds before they reproduce by seed or by bulb division. Catch weeds with enough active growth and leaf surface area to absorb the chemical, but ideally before they are so large as to require much more chemical application and effort.

Only tackle what you can reasonably follow up and **STAY WITH IT!** The right chemical used correctly and in a timely fashion (or other timely non-chemical means) can be an investment in your and your neighbour’s future leisure!

It is important to remember that weed eradication is best done with an integrated approach, using a range of different control methods.

Keep your eye out for our next newsletter which will feature an article on weed control using non-chemical methods.

On the 27th March 2004 the Adelaide Hills Natural Resource Centre (AHNRC) at Norton Summit was officially launched by The Honourable MP Alexander Downer and included guest speeches by Hume McDonald (MLRGA INRM Group), Jay Hogan (Torrens Catchment Water Management Board), Bill Cooksley (Mayor Adelaide Hills Council) and Don Cranwell (AHNRC).

Over 150 people from the public attended and were able to view various natural resource, tourism, local produce and historical displays whilst enjoying some tasty food and a drop of locally produced wines.

The AHNRC was set up with various aims including:

- * To ensure an integrated regional approach to natural resource management including local government, community groups, government agencies and local landholders.
- * Provide advice and support for the sustainable management of agricultural and horticultural land for the benefit of the Adelaide Hills environment.
- * Ensure conservation and rehabilitation of existing native vegetation and revegetation initiatives.

- * Promote the ideals of soil conservation.
- * Promote fire prevention strategies in land management programmes.
- * Maintain and enhance the scenic amenities of the area.

A visit to the AHNRC provides the visitor with information on land management practices, weed control methods, biodiversity, soils, local fauna, water, animal pest control, tourism facilities and local attractions, historical information and walking trail maps. There is also a herbarium with over 200 plant samples (weeds and native) so you can identify virtually any plant in the area.

Community groups are encouraged to use the meeting room and there are opportunities for the use of office space in the centre. The AHNRC is staffed by volunteers and its success is largely dependent upon this.

If you wish to volunteer in any capacity (staffing, working bees or organisational), please call the Centre on 8390 1891 or just drop in and put your name down.

Winter jobs to do...

Even though the weather may look fairly uninviting for those outside jobs, there is still plenty to do!

- ◆ Attend one of our free short courses – contact Trees for Life on 8372 0150 for more information.
- ◆ Now is the ideal time to hand pull woody weeds, like broom, while the soil is soft, and it's also a good time to cut access tracks through dense weed thickets, to make spraying a little easier in the warmer months.
- ◆ Broad leaf weeds can be targeted through selective spraying.
- ◆ Keep your eye on any known *Monadenia* (African Weed Orchid) sites on your property from Sept-Dec, and dig out any plants which pop up. Plants are characterised by a blue-green colour with maroon tinges to the leaves (contact your local Animal & Plant Control Board or Council for more information).
- ◆ Get your seedlings into the ground if you have plants for revegetation.

- ☞ Do you have an Information Kit? Do you know of anyone else who would be interested in receiving a Kit?
- ☞ Would you like to be on our email list for news from the project, free courses & coming events?

Contact the Project Officer on 8390 1891 or email katrina@sixthcreek.com

The 6th Creek Catchment Group are supported by:



Torrens Catchment Water Management Board



Mount Lofty Ranges Catchment Program



ADELAIDE HILLS COUNCIL

Department for Environment and Heritage



MT LOFTY RANGES ANIMAL AND PLANT CONTROL BOARD


Natural Heritage Trust
Helping Communities Helping Australia

The Sixth Creek Catchment Group is a Landcare organisation with private and public landholder membership. The Group's objectives are the protection and rehabilitation of the catchment's natural resources.