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### **1. Festival of the Forests**

This Sunday, March 20 The Catchment & Landcare Association will have a display stand at the Festival of the Forests at the National Arboretum.

[www.canberraarboretum.org.au](http://www.canberraarboretum.org.au)

Southern ACT Catchment Group will be represented at the Catchment & Landcare Association tent. Interested in helping out – contact Steve Welch 6296 6400 or just show up on the day.

### **2. Catchment Group General Meeting**

The next General meeting of our catchment group will be at the Southern ACT Catchment Group Office, Urambi Primary School, 21 Snodgrass Crescent, Kambah. 4.30 to 6.30pm All welcome.

### **3. African Lovegrass Survey**

We would like to enlist your help with this survey, particularly for areas of Canberra Nature Park and the northern suburbs. Even if you are not sure of your plant identification we ask that you fill out the survey form as best you can. Information and a range of photos to help with identification along with the survey form can be downloaded from our website [www.sactcg.org.au](http://www.sactcg.org.au). African Lovegrass (ALG) is a highly invasive environmental and agricultural weed in the region. Enhanced education & improved control of ALG infestations were the main recommendations from a recent ALG regional forum run by SACTCG. It is imperative to increase community awareness and capacity to control this weed to stop large areas of the ACT from becoming monocultures. The 'Regional education on African Lovegrass - an integrated approach' project is funded under an Australian Government Community Action Grant, and will produce educational materials on the impacts of ALG,

best-practice control & identify priority areas. It will also increase community participation & improve coordination in ALG control and containment.

As part of this project a survey is being undertaken along major roads in the ACT and surrounding NSW. In addition, community members are being asked to send in records of African Lovegrass (and incidental records of other invasive weeds) in other areas of the ACT and surrounding NSW, including Canberra Nature Park, suburban roadsides, urban open space, areas surrounding public buildings etc.

These records will provide a perspective on the current distribution of the species. In 2001 a similar survey was undertaken, but concentrating on the distribution of another highly invasive introduced species, Chilean Needle Grass. The results were extremely helpful in identifying areas where the species occurred, and where it didn't occur (at that stage, it was not found at all in Gungahlin). Because volunteers in 2001 also provided records of sightings of African Lovegrass, this information can assist in comparing the current distribution with the past distribution in a range of sites and across a range of land uses.

Your help is requested, to fill out the survey form at sites where you see African Lovegrass growing, but also in sites that you do not find the grass. Please feel free to contact Sarah Sharp on 0402 576412 or Steve Welch on 6296 6400 about this project. The survey form along with comprehensive information on African Lovegrass and a gallery of AG photos can be found at [www.sactcg.org.au/node/348](http://www.sactcg.org.au/node/348)

#### **4. Earth Hour 2011**

Earth Hour 2011 takes place from 8.30pm on Saturday 26 March. The Theme for Earth Hour this year is 'Going Beyond the Hour'. For the last three years, Canberra has had the highest participation rate of any Australian capital city and it would be great to repeat that success. In 2010, 58% of the ACT population participated in Earth Hour, while 100% were aware of the event. It has also brought about real results. In 2010 it led to a 5.6% reduction in the amount of electricity used in Canberra during Earth Hour, and a reduction of 17.86 tonnes in the amount of greenhouse gas emissions. This is also an opportunity for you to either start or re-energise efforts to make long-term commitments to taking action on climate change, in line with this year's theme of 'Going Beyond the Hour'.

Officially register your participation through the Earth Hour website ([www.earthhour.org.au](http://www.earthhour.org.au)). The website has a range of information on how you can support the event.

Earth Hour Awards have been introduced in 2011. The Awards recognise individuals or organisations that are making a difference to the environment. Individuals or teams can apply themselves, or be nominated, in the following categories:

- Young Panda Award
- Workplace Champions Award
- Future Makers Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Education Award

## **5. MEDIA RELEASE - Canberra Nature Park Investigation**

Friday 18 March 2011

As part of the Investigation into the Canberra Nature Park (nature reserves); Molonglo River Corridor (nature reserves) and Googong Foreshores, the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment (OCSE) has released three papers for community information.

These papers have been commissioned to address some of the key issues relating to the terms of reference for the Investigation:

- Managing Rabbits in Canberra Nature Park by Dr Kent Williams
- Impacts of Climate on Canberra Nature Park: Risks and Responses by Dr Bob Webb, Climate Change Institute, The Australia National University
- Funding options [environmental levies] for protecting the environment through enhanced management actions by Ms Lisa Miller, Miller Consulting.

These papers do not reflect the views of the OCSE but will be used to inform the Investigation.

The papers have been posted for community information and are available at:

[www.envcomm.act.gov.au/investigations/nature\\_reserves\\_investigation](http://www.envcomm.act.gov.au/investigations/nature_reserves_investigation)

Comments on the issues raised in these papers are welcome and can be sent to: [envcomm@act.gov.au](mailto:envcomm@act.gov.au) by Friday 8 April 2011.

## **6. Building Soil Carbon Workshop**

If you are a land manager or primary producer with an interest in building soil carbon as a way of managing the effects of climate change, you should come along to workshops being run by the Organic Federation of Australia and supported by the ACT Regional Landcare Facilitator Initiative and the ACT Natural Resource Management. Besides building soil carbon, the workshop also deals with "best practice" methods to mitigate the effects of climate change.

DATE: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2011

TIME: 9am – 4pm

PLACE: The Shakespeare Centre for Scouting - Camp Cottermouth, 1435 Cotter Road, Stromlo ACT

COST: FREE - The ACT Natural Resource Management Council will subsidise the costs of this workshop to participants.

The workshop will be delivered by Tim Marshall from TM Organics. Tim is Deputy Chair of the Organic Federation of Australia, and has visited more than 3000 organic and organic in conversion properties in 25 countries. He is also the author of numerous books and articles and is a lively and engaging presenter.

The workshop covers

- background to climate change
- how to build the long-lasting forms of soil carbon, humus
- farming strategies that maintain production and sequester

REGISTRATIONS TO:

Sally McIntosh, [sally.mcintosh@act.gov.au](mailto:sally.mcintosh@act.gov.au) 62052913 Mobile: 0410 154 126

RSVP by 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 (*for catering purposed*)

## **7. Draft – National Serrated Tussock Strategic Plan released**

The draft National Serrated Tussock Strategic Plan has been released and is now open for public comment. The draft Plan builds on previous Strategic Plans and creates a framework to better coordinate management of serrated tussock across Australia. Bronwen Wicks, the National Serrated Tussock Coordinator, is happy to answer any questions, clarify anything that is unclear or give a broader context to what the strategy is trying to achieve. She can be contacted on (02) 4828 6632 or [bronwen.wicks@industry.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bronwen.wicks@industry.nsw.gov.au). Comments can be made via the website. To look at the document and make comments please go to: <http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/serratedtussock/>

## **8. Mobile Quikspray unit available to landholders**

The Southern ACT Catchment Group supported by an ACT Environment Grant has purchased a trailer mounted QuikSpray unit to assist landholders across the ACT to undertake weed control. The 600lt dual hose unit is now available to any rural lease in the ACT and those properties adjacent to the ACT border. The Southern ACT Catchment Group Inc. offers to lend its mobile Quikspray Unit under a limited number of simple conditions:

1. Unit is to be returned in the same condition as it was lent;
2. Only clean water is to be used in herbicide tank;
3. A small donation per day of lending is requested to be paid to the Southern ACT Catchment Group to assist with unit maintenance, registration and insurance;
4. The borrower agrees to supply as to what weeds were targeted, herbicide, rates and volumes used and the location.

To find out more or book the spray unit contact: Steve Welch on 6296 6400

## **9. Don't be a Drifter Herbicide spraying workshops**

ActewAGL and the ACT NRM Council are to provide funding for herbicide use training organised by SACTCG. Through the catchment group, rural landholders will have free access to high quality chemical use training that will result in more efficient and safe use of herbicide for weed control in rural ACT. The proposed training package with the 'Spray Safe and Save' Company will provide training to land managers in the most efficient weed control practices as well as the economic, health and environmental benefits associated with correct use of chemicals (see below). The concept is to deliver an advanced practical/theory session in one day, which will include observing, using UV light, droplets of water coloured with dye, applied to stubble, leaves or grasses at different rates, nozzles and pressures. To reinforce the workshop information the day will be followed by small group on-farm half day sessions where spray applicators work with their own equipment and have their questions answered, guided by an experienced operator. Dates are yet to be confirmed but will probably be sometime next May/June.

To register your interest contact: Steve Welch on 6296 6400.

## **10. Radio Landcare**

For an interesting update on local landcare listen to:

**2XX FM** 98.3 Tuesdays 9 - 10am

**QBN FM** 96.7 Sundays 8 - 9am

Southern ACT Catchment Group has a regular spot on 2XX every third Tuesday of the month. Contact Steve or Martin if you have a desire to be involved. On Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April, members of the Cooleman Ridge Park Care Group will be on air to help celebrate the group's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## **11. The Great 'Simple Living' Survey**

The Simplicity Institute is an organization dedicated to research and policy analysis around the topic of simple living, downshifting, and similar lifestyles. This research is profoundly important as it touches the core of global problems such as climate change, over-consumption, work-life balance and a host of other social and ecological issues. The Simplicity Institute's current research project is focused on people who have chosen a 'simpler' lifestyle, including changes such as reduced or restrained income, reduced consumption or reduced working hours. If this sounds like you, then you are part of the most promising social movement on the planet. Learning more about people like you is therefore extremely important, so if you can spare 4 minutes to answer some quick questions then please do! As an added incentive, if you participate you'll go into the draw to win an exciting book package on the topic of 'simple living'.

To learn more and help build a better future, click below:

<http://simplicityinstitute.org/phpQ/fillsurvey.php?sid=2>

## **12. Have your say on Caring for our Country**

The Australian Government is inviting your views on its NRM program - Caring for our Country. The Australian Government is looking at what is working well, what can be improved and what the future challenges will be in protecting Australia's natural resources. To get the conversation started, the Australian Government have released a discussion paper (attached) which outlines a series of common topics people have already raised with us. The Australian Government invite you to contribute to this review of Caring for our Country and have your say on the future of natural resource management in Australia.

The discussion paper and information on how to make a submission is also available at [www.nrm.gov.au](http://www.nrm.gov.au). Written submissions are due by 20 May 2011.

## **13. The Science of Climate Change: Questions and Answers**

Based on a series of key questions, this publication from the Australian Academy of Science aims to address confusion created by contradictory information in the public domain. It sets out to explain the current situation in climate science, including where there is consensus in the scientific community and where uncertainties exist.

*The Science of Climate Change: Questions and Answers* was prepared by a Working Group and Oversight Committee made up of Academy Fellows and other Australian scientists with internationally recognised expertise in climate science.

<http://www.science.org.au/policy/climatechange.html?source=cmail>

#### **14. Grant round open on climate change engagement projects:**

The target for the grants is community engagement on climate change, so not relevant for individual Landcare groups but may be relevant for a strategic collaborative approach to sequestration and the link to what individuals can do to offset their own emissions

[http://www.environment.act.gov.au/climate\\_change/climate\\_change\\_grants](http://www.environment.act.gov.au/climate_change/climate_change_grants)

Contact Debra Grogan: [debra.grogan@act.gov.au](mailto:debra.grogan@act.gov.au)

#### **15. Molonglo Stage 2: Community Forum**

In March 2011 ACTPLA will commence consultation on the draft planning and development framework for stage 2, seeking the community's views on:

- housing for 18,000 new residents
- a lively commercial centre and employment hub
- community open spaces and facilities
- safe transport networks for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists
- protecting the natural environment through sustainable energy, water and waste management.

*What:* Community display and forum

*When:* 24 March 2011

*Where:* St Peters Anglican Church Hall, Parkinson Street, Weston (next to Cooleman Court)

*Display:* 3.00pm – 6.00pm. Drop in any time to view displays and talk with ACTPLA staff and planning consultants.

*Forum:* 6.30pm – 8.30pm. Discuss key development challenges and possible options for Molonglo Valley stage 2.

More information:

[http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/topics/significant\\_projects/planning\\_studies/molonglo\\_valley](http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/topics/significant_projects/planning_studies/molonglo_valley) or email [MolongloValleyStage2@act.gov.au](mailto:MolongloValleyStage2@act.gov.au)

#### **16. ActewAGL Source Water Protection Grants**

We have been advised that ActewAGL have funds available for projects within their water catchment area (including Tuggeranong) that will improve water quality. Any ideas contact Steve Welch 6296 6400.