

# The Bushcarer

Bush For Life  
Spring 2011  
Number 7



## Bush For Life News

### Spring edition

Welcome to the seventh edition of the Bush For Life newsletter. We hope you find some useful information in this edition as we head out of the cold and rainy weather and into sunny spring.

### Spraying tips ...the Bush For Life way

With an increase in rain comes an increase in winter weeds, leading many of us to pull out the spray unit on our Bush For Life sites. Now is the ideal time to remind everyone of the tips and techniques we use in the program so that weed spraying is as safe and efficient as possible.

#### Safety First

- *Chemical gloves*  
Chemical gloves should always be worn when preparing and using the spray unit. This will reduce the likelihood of herbicides, dye and surfactant ending up on your skin. It is also essential during spraying sessions that hands are washed before eating and toilet stops and at the end of the day.

- *Safety glasses*  
Safety glasses must also be worn whenever a spray unit is being prepared or used. There are a number of styles available that will fit over glasses (glasses alone do not cover the eyes properly). It is

good practice to wear your safety glasses at all times on a Bush For Life site. If you have not got safety glasses or chemical gloves please ask your Regional Coordinator for some.

#### Triple Rinsing

Triple rinsing a spray unit after use is a good habit to get into. This decontaminates the unit and reduces the chance of blockages from herbicides such as Glyphosate that can crystallise when the unit is not in use. It also ensures residue is not left behind that can deteriorate the unit. This is also a great time to check that no plant material is blocking the spray tip, like the annoying *Acacia paradoxa* spines.

#### How much?

It is important to use these directions to avoid using too much herbicide in the bushland (and you could save some time and money in the long run).

- *Glyphosate*: For general weed control we use 10mls of Glyphosate per 1 litre of water. (50mls in a 5 litre spray unit, a ration of 1:100. For specific weeds refer to the label.

- *Surfactant*: This is added at a rate of 2mls per 1 litre to achieve maximum efficiency. Without surfactant there will be more runoff, especially on waxy leaves like Three cornered garlic.

- *Blue dye*: To help you see where you have already sprayed, blue dye is added at a rate of 20mls per 5 litres as a general rule (however using up to 35mls can help with darker

leaves like Blackberry) If you require more glyphosate, surfactant or blue dye please contact your Regional Coordinator.

### Keep an eye out for native orchids

This spring the Native Orchid Society of South Australia (NOSSA) is releasing a revised and updated version of SA's *Native Orchids* DVD by I J Bates. See the NOSSA website for details at [www.nossa.org.au](http://www.nossa.org.au)

Cover photos from top to bottom:  
*Enchylaena tomentosa*, *Dodonaea viscosa* ssp. *spatulata*, *Correa reflexa*

## Contact us

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You are one of over 700 bushcarers actively managing more than 300 Bush For Life sites encompassing more than 3400ha of bushland in South Australia

# Apple berry or Blue-bell creeper... Which native is the local?

By Jenna Currie  
BFL Field Officer

Distinguishing between a plant indigenous to your area and another native from the same genus that is not indigenous can be confusing when conducting bushcare. Identifying if a plant is an Apple berry or a Blue-bell creeper (more commonly known as Sollya), is one example and can be a tricky task for both volunteers and Regional Coordinators.

Apple berries and Sollya all belong to the genus *Billardiera* which in turn is found in the family Pittosporaceae, along with bursarias, and well known pittosporums.



In the Mount Lofty Ranges the indigenous Apple berries such as *Billardiera cymosa*, *B. versicolor* or *B. uniflora* can be mistakenly identified as the non-indigenous Sollya or *Billardiera heterophylla* (syn. *Sollya heterophylla*). Sollya is from Western Australia and was introduced to SA as a garden climber. It spreads by seed and root segments and has escaped from gardens into native

vegetation where annual rainfall exceeds 550mm, becoming established as a prolific weed and bushland invader.

### Identifying the differences

The most common way to identify the differences between these climbers is to examine the flowers.

- **Flowers:** Flowers of the local *B. cymosa* are 11-20mm long and are coloured purple. Flowers of the weedy Sollya are smaller, 4-12mm long, and are a rich blue colour. Unfortunately Sollya can sometimes have white flowers so can be confused with *B. versicolor*, which has pale purple to creamy coloured flowers, or *B. uniflora* which has cream or white flowers.



- **Petals:** If you still get in a pickle comparing flower colours then looking more closely at the petal formation could help. The petals of indigenous Apple berries seem fused at the base of the flower causing it to form a tube or trumpet like shape. Whereas the petals of Sollya are free and form a more bell shape structure.

However, *Billardiera* species only flower in spring and summer, so how can we identify the local species at other times of the year?

- **Fruit:** In summer fruits will form after the flowers and this is another way of determining the weed from the native (if they haven't been eaten beforehand by birds, foxes or the bush tucker enthusiast!)



The fruits of Sollya are longer and narrower than the fruits of *Billardiera cymosa* but are shorter than the fruits of *B. versicolor* or *B. uniflora*.

- **Leaves:** When no flowers or fruits can be found the only option left is to examine the leaves and you may need a hand lens to do this effectively. Leaves of all the *Billardiera* sp. are lance shaped yet vary in size. Sollya and *B. cymosa* leaves are very similar in length, 16-60mm, yet Sollya leaves can be broader than *B. cymosa*, up to 22mm. Another key difference is *B. cymosa* leaves do not have a leaf stalk (this where you may need a hand lens) and the Sollya leaves become gradually pointed. But remember, leaves can be very variable in their shape depending on their environmental conditions so if you are not 100% confident with your identification then wait until the plant flowers to confirm if it stays or goes.



### The treatment

If you have identified your *Billardiera* as an exotic, what's the most effective way to treat it? Young plants or seedlings can be gently hand pulled or dug out but all the roots need to be removed to prevent the plant from reshooting. Therefore it is recommended to use the cut and swab technique or drill and fill for larger plants with thick stems. Spraying is not a recommended strategy as it is likely the Sollya will be using a native shrub or tree for support making off target herbicide damage inevitable. If you require further clarification or help do not hesitate to contact your Regional Coordinator.

### References

Department for Environment and Heritage, 2006, *Sollya or Blue-bell Creeper - Billardiera heterophylla* fact sheet, [www.environment.sa.gov.au](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au)



## Mapping the Menace

By Peter Watton

BFL Operations Manager  
(South)

When preparing a strategy to tackle any weed problem in a patch of bushland, it is very useful to have a map showing where the various weeds are. The map may concentrate on a particular weed species or all the major weeds on the site. These maps can take many forms, from a rough, hand drawn mud-map to drawing on top of an aerial photograph or using a GPS (Global Positioning System) unit to produce a more accurate map on a computer.

In spring 2010, I was set the task of mapping the Sparaxis infestations within Piggott Range Road Reserve, Onkaparinga Hills, in preparation for treatment in the coming years. I thought I would share with you the way I did this, so that you too will be encouraged to give weed mapping a go on your site.

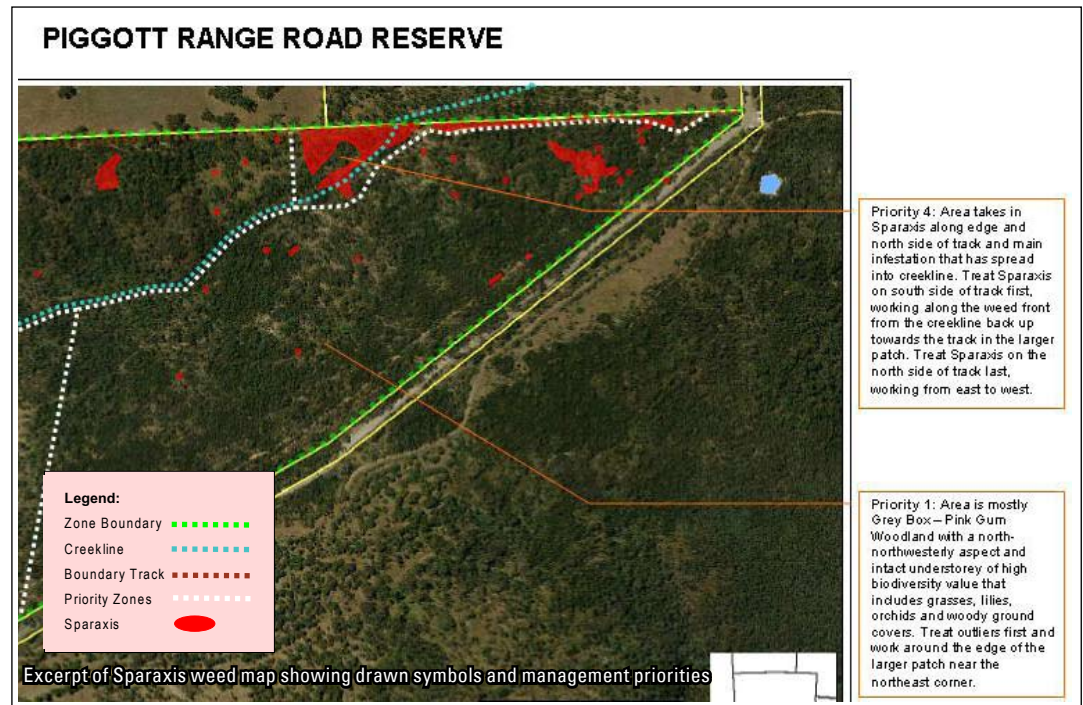
### The timing

It is important to plan to do mapping surveys when the target plants are most easily recognised and found. For this reason, I chose to venture out in to the reserve mid October, when the Sparaxis was flowering.

### The features to note

Armed with my GPS unit, notebook, pencil, camera and plenty of water, I set about walking around the reserve. During the Sparaxis hunt, I used the GPS unit to record the location of individuals, small isolated patches and larger infestations of Sparaxis. On each occasion a note was made about the size of the patch and the quality of the native vegetation in which it was growing.

If you are preparing a mud-map, make sure you note the location of the weeds in relation to features on the site



that can be easily found at a later time. For example fences, creeklines, rocky outcrops, tracks and large trees can easily be drawn on a map with simple symbols.

It is important to make sure the entire site is patrolled when mapping, to ensure all occurrences of the target weed are considered when prioritising follow up control.

### The map

Once back in the office, I downloaded the data from the GPS unit into my computer and created a map in *NatureMaps*, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' free interactive online mapping site, developed to support South Australia's natural resource management ([www.naturemaps@sa.gov.au](http://www.naturemaps@sa.gov.au)).

A couple of other web-based options that have aerial photographs on-line are *Google Earth* ([www.googleearth.com](http://www.googleearth.com)) and *NearMap* ([www.nearmap.com](http://www.nearmap.com)).

*NatureMaps* is a very useful site, as it has the ability to display various data on the map, including an aerial photograph, property boundaries, roads, topographic data and information on flora and fauna among many others. Data

collected by GPS can be used to create projects, which can be saved and re-activated at a later date.

Once the data was accurately captured in the map with an aerial photo, it was used to create the final map in a Microsoft Word document. The drawing toolbar allowed other features to be overlaid, including walking track, site boundary, management zones and callout boxes containing the management priorities.

The finished result was a single page map, which provided both a visual representation of the site and particular weed issue, together with written management priorities (see excerpt above). Of course a computer and GPS do not have to be used to do this; it can be done with a mud map on the site, or by drawing on top of an aerial image. In my case, because I did the initial mapping with a GPS, the data can be taken back to the field to help re-locate the Sparaxis infestations for treatment.

### The treatment strategy

Whatever the form your map takes, it can be useful to make several copies and to update it as you start treating the weeds. You can even use a different one for each working

bee to show where you worked that day.

When you set about prioritising the control of the weeds, ensure you go back to the basic minimal disturbance bush regeneration principles:

- Work from the good bush outwards using weed fronts
- Disturb the soil as little as possible
- Do not over clear weeds
- Work to the advantage of native species

If you have small isolated patches of priority weeds in good bushland, these should be targeted before large infestations in degraded areas. The larger infestations should be consolidated and then work along the weed fronts, allowing the regeneration of native plants into the areas cleared to determine the pace at which the weeds are removed.

This approach is the most efficient method of weed control in bushland and ensures that good quality bushland remains in good condition by denying weeds the opportunity to set seed and become established in large numbers.

Have a go at producing a weed map for your site, I am sure you will find it helps clarify where you should direct your bush regeneration efforts.

## Enjoy Sunday mornings at beautiful Minnawarra

Does spending a Sunday morning in the open air amongst natural vegetation and diverse flora and fauna sound like your cup of tea? Well now is your chance. We are organising a regular monthly working bee at *Minnawarra*, a 330 hectare property near Myponga owned and run by the Willing family.

As well as being a beef and sheep farm, approximately 110 hectares of natural bushland has been fenced off. Most of this is under a Heritage Agreement with some areas of swamps also recently fenced for protection. The property is home to well over 100 species of indigenous plants including 11 rated as rare in South Australia.

The property owners Richard and Janet, have been using their *Scientific Expedition Group* skills and have been collecting data on the property for 10 years, monitoring changes in fauna activity following the exclusion of stock from the native vegetation. In the April 2011 survey there was an exciting



*Antechinus flavipes*

result of 136 mammals, 35 skinks and 8 frogs caught, 13 recaptured from previous surveys. These included *Antechinus flavipes* (Marsupial Mice), *Rattus fuscipes* (Bush Rats), *Rattus lutreolus* (Swamp Rats) and *Lampropholis guichenoti* (Common Garden Skinks).

One of the gullies that was cleared 35 years ago is now covered in dense native

vegetation including *Gastrodia sesamoides* (Potato Orchid) with very few weeds. Last year volunteers helped remove the occasional herbaceous weed and blackberry in this valley. Doing this regularly would be a huge benefit, so until the end of 2011 we have scheduled working bees for **the 3rd Sunday of the month**. Come along on any or all of these dates:

**18 Sep**

**16 Oct**

**20 Nov**

**18 Dec**

*10am-1pm, bring your lunch*

Contact Sue Bradstreet on 0427 010 224 or email [sueb@treesforlife.org.au](mailto:sueb@treesforlife.org.au) for further details.



Cutting blackberry canes at Minnawarra

## BAT and Volunteers end of year picnic

The end of the year is fast approaching and this year we would like to invite *all* bushcarers along to our end of year *BAT and Volunteers Picnic* at the **South Parklands, Adelaide on Fri 16 Dec (TBC)**. Whether you have ever been on a BAT or not,



### Private Bushland Property - Volunteers Needed



Scott Creek - 24km from south east of Adelaide

**Secluded bushland with wonderful species diversity!**

Volunteers are needed to help look after this beautiful property that was fortunatley purchased by a keen conservationist in 1985, outbidding someone who wanted to stock it with goats.

Today the property contains Messmate Stringybark and SA Blue Gum forest. There are also several rare Candlebarks scattered throughout and a diverse understorey, with many lilies and orchids.

For those wanting to get up close and personal with wildlife, there is also an abundance of birdlife and even some bandicoots that call this lovely place home.

Much of the property is in very good condition with scattered woody weeds and some bulb weeds needing attention.

Want to know more or are interested in helping out? Call the BFL Volunteer Coordinator on 8406 0542, or email [bfl@treesforlife.org.au](mailto:bfl@treesforlife.org.au).

**Or come to a mini-BAT with Regional Coordinator Jenna on 12 October and check out the wildflowers & wildlife yourself.**

Trees For Life
Bush For Life Program

we would love to see you there (mini-BATs and BMDs are BATs too!).

If you have attended a BAT this year, you are already on our invitation list and will be receiving an invitation. If you have been on mini-BATs, Bush Management Days or are volunteering on your own site and would like to receive further information and an invitation please contact Emma on 8406 0542, or email [emmab@treesforlife.org.au](mailto:emmab@treesforlife.org.au).

### Supporters:

The Bush For Life program is supported by the South Australian Government through the Adelaide & Mt. Lofty Ranges NRM Board, the Murray Darling Basin NRM Board, and the Native Vegetation Council; participating local governments & corporate landholders, and Trees For Life members and donors.



Adelaide & Mt. Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board  
South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board

