

"Do it with Dung"

FROM THE MOUNTAINS
TO THE MURRAY

NEWSLETTER

Issue 7: October 2009

Project Update – 2009 & beyond

The "Do it with Dung" project is funded by the Federal government's "Caring for our Country" program. This funding will finish at the end of November 2009. The monitoring component of the project has provided a fantastic insight into dung beetle activity (or lack of) in both NE Victoria and Corowa shire. It would be ideal if the monitoring could continue for a further 12 months. This would provide 18 months worth of very valuable data (including summer dung beetle activity: when/where/what/how many?).

At the August steering committee meeting, it was agreed to investigate potential funding sources to extend the life of the project. The good news is that the Ovens Landcare Network was successful in sourcing funding to keep the project operational until May 2010.

Project co-ordination will continue at two days per week, allowing monitoring results to be collated, the continuation of species trials and the production and distribution of a regular newsletter. Many thanks are extended to Ovens Landcare for their support and commitment. Other sources of funding are being sought to further extend the project to October 2010.

Project activity report: Feb – Oct 2009

Belinda is compiling a report that will include:

- Monitoring results maps for each species
- Seasonality graphs for each species
- Summary of species trials to date
- Summary of project activities/workshops
- Summary of 2009 beetle releases

It is requested that all monitoring results (including nil results) up to October are sent as soon as possible, so they can be included in the report.

The report will be finalised by the end of November and all monitors will receive a copy. The report will also be available for download from the Dung Beetle website in late November.

Requests for hardcopies can also be directed to Belinda (contact details listed above).

Project Officer: Belinda Pearce

Phone: 02 6027 5294

email: abanas@bigpond.com

Dung beetles on Landcare website



<http://northeast.landcarevic.net.au/dungbeetle>

The website contains various dung beetle resources including project newsletters, articles, dung beetle identification chart, upcoming events, dung beetle images and photos. The Project report will be available for download in late November.



Screen shot from photo album on website

"Do it with Dung" Evaluation Survey

Monitors and Project participants are invited to take a few minutes to complete and return a short project evaluation and practice change survey. All returned surveys will be in the running to win one of six bottles of wine. Survey forms can be returned to either Sue Leavold or Belinda Pearce (return details on survey form) by **Friday 6th November**.

Your feedback provides valuable information that will assist with future program evaluation and planning. Surveys can be completed anonymously.

Around the traps

If your traps are turning up empty, you may like to take comfort in knowing that you are not alone.

Nil results have been reported at:

Site 1	Buraja NSW	16/9 & 1/10
Site 3	Savernake NSW	30/9
Site 17	Springhurst	29/9
Site 21	Byawatha	16/9 & 29/9
Site 38	Berringama	30/9
Site 45	Tallangatta Valley	1/10 & 9/10
Site 52	Thulogolong	13/9
Site 53	Talgarno	3/10
Site 54	Tawonga	13/9 & 24/9
Site 59	Greta	9/10
Site 63	Cheshunt	6/9
Site 72	Meadow Ck	17/9
Site 87	Whorouly	17/9
Site 93	Bowmans Forest	29/9
Site 102	Tallangatta South	14/9
Site 105	Mitta Mitta	18/9 & 30/9
Site 111	Boorhaman	13/9 & 1/10

Special commendation goes to a number of monitors who have had nil results for every trap they have set. It is a test of patience and persistence to keep setting traps only to find them empty the next day. Continual nil results have been recorded at:

Site 7	Mulwala	Site 84	King Valley
Site 53	Talgarno	Site 109	Omeo

It is expected that all monitoring sites will have summer beetle activity. It is just a question of when their activity will commence.

From results in to date, in the past four weeks seven species have been trapped. The number in brackets is the most beetles caught in a trap.

- *Bubas bison* (7)
- *Euoniticellus fulvus* (45)
- *Euoniticellus pallipes* (1)
- *Onitis aygulus* (1)
- *Onthophagus australis* (2)
- *Onthophagus binodis* (4)
- *Onthophagus taurus* (145)

The catch of the day goes to site 104 at Tallangatta South with 145 *O. taurus* & 45 *E. fulvus* on 6/10/09.

Upcoming events –

As part of the “wrapping up” of the Caring for our Country component of the project, we will be hosting a number of feedback sessions across the region. These sessions will provide:

- Summary of project activities to date
- Detailed results for your area
- Update on future project activities
- An opportunity to celebrate our project achievements

Monitors will receive an invitation to these sessions once dates and venues are finalised.

Upcoming monitoring weeks

Weeks commencing:

Sunday 25th October

Sunday 8th November

It would be appreciated if you could send in results (including nil results) up to and including October to Belinda as soon as possible. This will ensure that they are included in the Project activity report. It would also be appreciated if you could send in any samples of species that you have trapped. *O. binodis*, *O. taurus* and *O. australis* can be tricky to tell apart. If you require more monitoring slips, envelopes or matchboxes, please let Belinda know.

The wet weather and “thin” spring cattle dung have provided some challenges in both collecting dung to bait traps and in finding a dry 24-hour period to set traps. We can only work to the conditions, and sometimes it isn't always possible to set traps. It is also recognised that this is a very busy time for farmers and there are simply too many things happening. Please do not stress if you are unable to keep up with the monitoring schedule.

Next Steering Committee Meeting:



To be advised.

Steering committee members & Project supporters



The “Do it with Dung – from the Mountains to the Murray” Project is funded by “Caring for our Country”, managed by Kiewa Catchment Landcare Groups and supported by regional Landcare Groups, DPI and NECMA. The project also receives direction from a voluntary steering committee.