

# "Do it with Dung"

FROM THE MOUNTAINS  
TO THE MURRAY

## NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the first edition of the "Do it with Dung" newsletter for 2010. The good news is that the project has funding (two days per week) until the end of May this year. I plan to be available Thursdays and Fridays.

### Geotrupes spiniger beetles emerging:

In March 2009 the project released 90,000 *Geotrupes spiniger* beetles across the region. If you had a *G.spiniger* release on your property, it is important that you have cattle near your release site, as the next generation of these beetles has begun to emerge. It is very exciting to know that our released beetles have bred successfully in the field.



*Geotrupes spiniger*  
(Blue dung beetle)

Length: 20-25mm

Colour: Glossy black beetle  
with metallic blue/purple  
underside

**It's important to have cattle at or near your *G.spiniger* release site. This will ensure newly emerged beetles will have access to a feed.**

Recent *G.spiniger* trappings include:

30/10/09	4 beetles	Tallangatta South
25/12/09	1 beetle	Lucyvale*
26/12/09	3 beetles	Lucyvale*
28/12/09	1 beetle	Tawonga South
2/1/10	4 beetles	Lucyvale*
14/1/10	1 beetle	Mitta Mitta

\*Over 15,000 *G.spiniger* beetles were released in Lucyvale in 2008. There were no releases in 2009, so the beetles trapped represent the second generation. This is a very encouraging result and it should be remembered, that for every beetle trapped, there are likely to be many more out there.

In March 2009, a shade-cloth tent was set-up at Tallangatta South with 50 beetles. The first beetle emergences were noticed on 19/12/09, with 47 beetles emerged by 29/12/09. This is consistent with the findings of shade-cloth tent trials conducted at Lucyvale in 2008.

### Monitoring Results Summary:

A summary of monitoring results is now available and can be downloaded from:

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

Number of beetles trapped (Feb – Oct 2009):

Introduced:	<b>9171</b>	(9 species)
Native:	<b>255</b>	(4 species)
Total:	<b>9426</b>	(13 species)

The three most abundant species were: *Onthophagus taurus* (3,495), *Bubas bison* (2,926), and *Euoniticellus fulvus* (1,866).

These three species accounted for over 90% of the trap results. All three species are introduced beetles. The most abundant native species trapped was *Onthophagus australis* (234).

### Trap Results: Feb – Oct 2009

Species	No. of beetles trapped	No. of sites with species
<i>O.taurus</i>	3495	55
<i>B.bison</i>	2926	45
<i>E.fulvus</i>	1866	41
<i>O.alexis</i>	415	41
<i>O.aygulus</i>	231	24
<i>O.binodis</i>	182	16
<i>E.pallipes</i>	32	10
<i>G.spiniger</i>	23	10
<i>E.africanus</i>	1	1
<i>O.australis</i>	234	25
<i>O.pentacanthus</i>	13	5
<i>O.victoriensis</i>	8	2
<i>O.pexatus</i>	2	2

## Around the traps – Summer beetles active

Many sites are now trapping summer beetles, and have reported a marked reduction in fly activity accompanying increased beetle activity.

### *Onitis alexis*

Site 19	32 alexis	16/12	Chiltern Valley
Site 14	14 alexis	17/12	Byawatha
Site 52	13 alexis	19/12	Thologolong
Site 17	11 alexis	28/12	Springhurst
Site 53	9 alexis	2/1	Talgarno

### *Onitis aygulus*

Site 8	52 aygulus	27/11	Corowa
Site 19	41 aygulus	16/12	Chiltern Valley

### *Onthophagus binodis*

Site 37	50 binodis	1/1	Lucyvale
Site 39	36 binodis	25/12	Lucyvale

### *Onthophagus taurus*

Site 44	3000 taurus	3/1	Mitta Mitta
Site 71a	2500 taurus	29/12	Edi Upper
Site 54	2000 taurus	11/1	Tawonga
Site 39	771 taurus	25/12	Lucyvale
Site 65	615 taurus	17/12	Oxley
Site 72	453 taurus	2/1	Meadow Ck
Site 45	400 taurus	18/1	Tallangatta Vy

### *Euoniticellus fulvus*

Site 44	2000 fulvus	3/1	Mitta Mitta
Site 54	1000 fulvus	11/1	Tawonga
Site 71a	500 fulvus	29/12	Edi Upper
Site 63	380 fulvus	27/12	Cheshunt

Other species being trapped: *Euoniticellus pallipes*

## Tips for managing large trappings

If you find that your trap is full of beetles (and dung), here are some tips to help sort through large catches.

- Use water to separate dung from beetles. Half fill a bucket with water and tip trap catch into bucket. The beetles will rise to the surface and can be scooped out using an old sieve.
- Once clean, beetles can be placed in the fridge. This will slow them down and makes it easier to separate beetle species.
- If you have the time and equipment, you can weigh out 100 beetles of a species and then weigh out entire catch of species to estimate numbers.
- If you are short of time, tip trap contents onto a sheet of plastic or concrete. Spread beetles out thinly and take a sample of each species present. Provide an estimation of number of species present.

## Upcoming Events:

- Lucyvale Feedback forum 29/1/10 6.30pm
- Entertainment by Peter Denahy (creator of the Dung beetle song).
  - BBQ tea (meat supplied)
  - Bring salad and/or sweets to share
  - BYO drinks
  - Venue; Lucyvale Hall – 6.30pm

Mudgegonga Workshop 18/2/10 7.30pm

Corowa Feedback forum to be advised

Mitta Mitta Feedback forum to be advised

## “Do it with Dung” Survey winners

A big thank-you to everyone who completed and returned the Project survey. Your feedback has been most valuable. We received over 50 responses, which was a great result. All names went into the hat and six names were drawn at the Milawa forum (30/11/09), and the winners are...

Bob & Marj Falconer	Meadow Creek
Marg Davis	Corowa
Marilyn Mille	Myrtleford
Bronwyn Thomas	Mulwala
Lesley Johnson	Byawatha
One more (memory failure)	Milawa forum

If you haven't already received your bottle of wine, Belinda will be in touch to arrange delivery.

## Upcoming monitoring weeks:

Monitoring weeks commence on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month:

### Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January & Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February

Monitoring weeks are a guide only. All results are welcomed (whatever the date)!

## Next Steering Committee Meeting:

The next meeting will be on: **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February**, 10.00am – 11.30am (followed by lunch)

North East CMA Office,  
Footmark Court Wodonga  
Please RSVP to Belinda by Wed. 17<sup>th</sup> Feb



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FOR  
OUR  
COUNTRY



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