



# Lantana Lowdown

## Seeing out 2007 with a bang

The last quarter has been a busy one for the Lantana WoNS team, with workshops, field trips and product launches around the country. Unfortunately this newsletter can only hope to provide a snap shot of the fantastic work done by a raft of groups and individuals around the country. That said, I hope you will find the information provided here useful and heartening.

I particularly encourage you to make use of some of the wonderful education resources that have been made available through the Lantana WoNS program—the most recent of which is our new DVD, *Battling lantana: learning from the experiences of others*.

2008 promises to be even bigger and better than 2007, with the launch of our new schools education resource and the new and improved Lantana Best Practice Manual. But until then, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year from the Lantana team.

### Inside this issue:

Seeing out 2007 with a bang	1
Protecting biodiversity from lantana...	1
The winged avenger	2
DVD launch	2
Follow-up: the oft-forgotten control phase	3
The verdict: Northern Lantana Roadshow	3
Starting point: grants and funding assistance	4
Corrections — Issue 2	4
Contacts	4

## Protecting biodiversity from lantana... a call for site nominations

Lantana has been confirmed as one of our worst environmental weeds, with more than 1250 native plants and 150 native animals at risk due to its invasion according to a recent study.

The study, jointly undertaken by the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) and the Lantana WoNS team, is part of a new two-step plan to reduce the threat posed by lantana to native species in Australia.

DECC ecologist, Dr Paul Downey said that by developing this two-step approach, control of lantana could be directed to sites where the native plants and animals were at greatest risk of extinction.

“The plan is a simple one: first identify the native species at risk from lantana invasion; then identify priority sites for lantana control,” he said.

“Part of this project, funded by the Commonwealth’s Defeating the Weeds Menace, will also fund initial control of lantana at some of the high priority sites,” Dr Downey said.

“We plan to target areas where there is the greatest likelihood of lantana control and recovery of these key native species.

“Lantana is so widespread that eradication is unlikely but this plan provides the tools to focus attention on protecting the most vulnerable areas,” he said.

The first step is nearly finalised but Dr Downey said that there is still a critical need for more information on possible sites for rehabilitation.

“Without input from land managers we won’t have the full picture and can’t develop a list of priority sites that are reflective of the true situation,” Dr Downey said.

“Land managers who have lantana and any of the identified high priority native species at risk on their land are being asked to provide site details for inclusion in the plan,” he said.

Where possible, site information is being compiled across all land tenures, including national parks, council reserves and private properties.

According to Dr Downey, this plan is unique in that it identifies specific sites for saving native species across the entire distribution of lantana in Australia.

Land managers who wish to be considered for the initial funding need to lodge their site nomination by the end of December, although on-going nominations for inclusion in the plan will be accepted up until the end of March 2008.

Once finalised, the plan can be used to guide future investment in lantana management for biodiversity conservation at a national, state, regional and local scale.

A specific website has been developed containing information about the project, lists of high priority native species for each NRM region, as well as the application form for site nominations.

The application process has been made as simple and painless as possible to ensure any land manager with species at risk can nominate their site for inclusion in this plan.

For more detail please see: [www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/Content/Lantana\\_threat\\_to\\_biodiversity](http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/Content/Lantana_threat_to_biodiversity) or email [lantana.plan@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lantana.plan@environment.nsw.gov.au).



Season's Greetings from the Lantana WoNS Team!



**Mahogany glider:** one of the many endangered species at risk due to lantana habitat invasion

## The winged avenger

In October the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries launched a new biological control agent for lantana: the herringbone leaf mining fly (*Ophiomyia camarae*). Biosecurity Queensland's Managing Director Kareena Arthy and Senator the Hon. Ian Macdonald, jointly released the first batch of flies onto lantana plants at Brisbane Forest Park.

The flies are only 2–3mm in size but it's hoped this tiny winged avenger will have a serious effect on lantana in Australia.

As the name suggests, this fly attacks the leaves of lantana plants. The adult lays eggs on the underside of lantana leaves and the larvae feed on the internal structure of the leaf, forming herringbone shaped mines. Concerted attack from this insect should cause premature defoliation, placing the lantana plant under significant stress. While it is unlikely to kill plants outright, the aim is to at least stress plants and reduce their rate of spread.

Mass rearing programs have been established in Queensland at the Alan Fletcher Research Station in Sherwood and the Tropical Weeds Research Station in Charters Towers; and in New South Wales at the Grafton Agricultural Research and Advisory Station.

*O. camarae* favours lantana growing in shel-



**The newest biocontrol hope: the herringbone leaf mining fly**

tered, high humidity areas, such as gullies or riparian areas. To ensure effective establishment, the agent will initially be released by Biosecurity Queensland and NSW Department of Primary Industries staff in areas where conditions are suitable.

In South Africa, where previous releases of this fly have been undertaken, it has established and spread rapidly. Because of this capacity for spread, *O. camarae* is expected to self establish in suitable habitats in Australia within a relatively short period of time so it is hoped ongoing artificial distribution will be unnecessary.

While *O. camarae* should add an important dimension to lantana control in Australia, land managers are being urged to continue with their normal lantana control regime, and allow the leaf miner to do its part by reducing the rate of lantana spread.

For more information on the herringbone leaf mining fly, please contact the WoNS team via email at: [lantanaWoNS@dpi.qld.gov.au](mailto:lantanaWoNS@dpi.qld.gov.au).

## DVD launch

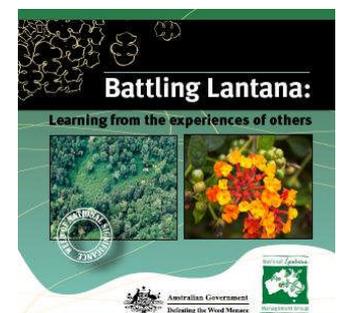
In keeping with the theme of launching and releasing, the Lantana WoNS Team is also proud to report the release of a new DVD, *Battling lantana: learning from the experiences of others*.

Senator Ian MacDonald addressed the gathering at Brisbane Forest Park, officially launching the DVD.

This DVD aims to reduce the uncertainty that land managers face when it comes to controlling lantana (*Lantana camara*). Landholders and public land managers have provided their insights into battling this weed to help others avoid many of the costly mistakes that are often made.

The story of their successes in reclaiming valued land is being told to show that the invasive spread of lantana can be beaten.

To receive your own copy, please place your order with the lantana WoNS team (see the contact details section).



**The latest weapon: building the knowledge base of landholders to fight the weed menace**



**“Land managers are being urged to continue with their normal lantana control regime, and allow the leaf miner to do its part by reducing the rate of lantana spread”**

## Follow-up: the oft-forgotten control phase

Follow-up is the most important aspect of lantana control—but often the least planned. When planning a control program, follow-up must be included in the process—and hence, must be accounted for in any control budget. Although the majority of time and money is spent on the initial phase, it is the relatively small amount of time and money required for following-up that isn't accounted for that can lead to the undoing of all the hard work that has already taken place.

Best Practice Management Officer Daniel Stock offers some tips on

follow-up control for lantana infestations:

- Always plan to follow-up any control effort;
- Only start a control program if you have budgeted for the follow-up;
- Plan for two to three follow-up treatments (usually over two to three years) The majority of time and money will be spent in the initial control phase;
- Cost effective control of larger infestations can be achieved by firstly removing the biomass (bulk of the plants), then treating the regrowth;
- When treating regrowth, foliar spraying is most common technique, but

it is vital that the plant has sufficient leaf growth to absorb enough chemical;

- Only spray with registered herbicides at registered rates—high doses of some chemicals will put the plants into shock, causing initial leaf drop before effective absorption of the chemical;
- Only mix herbicides that are labeled as tank partners otherwise their effectiveness will be dramatically reduced.

**“Follow-up is the most important aspect of lantana control—but can often be the least planned”**

## The verdict: Northern Lantana Roadshow

### Malanda

Despite the wet, windy and generally extreme weather conditions, there was still a fine turn out with more than 80 people at the first Lantana Field Day in Malanda – the first of the Northern Lantana Roadshow.

The information sessions were well received, with many inquiries and positive feedback throughout the day. Although the site walk had to be cancelled, due to the severity of the weather, many participants expressed their anticipation of more field days to view future progress.

### Glen Ruth Station

Unfortunately the field day at Glen Ruth had to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, but a few punters turned up

anyway so we conducted an impromptu field day and tour of the site. Glen Ruth Station, about 140km from Ingham provides an important example of effective lantana management on a larger scale.

Through a simple sequence of mechanical removal followed by seeding and minimal follow-up spot spraying, an area that was once 80 to 90 percent lantana is now clear workable land.

Another field day at Glen Ruth is planned for early next year, so stay posted.

### Abergowrie

Abergowrie was the second stop for the Northern Lantana Roadshow, and still well received with nearly 50 people in attendance.

A slightly different audience meant different motivations for lantana control with many landholders interested in the splatter gun technique for agricultural situations. It was quite exciting to see the field visit opening the eyes of so many land managers to alternative techniques.

The attendees at Abergowrie were also graced by a visit from two Mahogany gliders (*Petaurus gracilis*)—one of Australia's most endangered mammals. Thought for many years to be extinct, the Mahogany glider relies on large home ranges and is severely effected by habitat loss. Extensive lantana management work has been undertaken in the area surrounding Abergowrie to recover habitat from the invasive effects of lantana.



**The Lantana Roadshow**  
— taking in sites of northern Queensland

## Starting point: Grants and funding assistance

In the battle against lantana and other weeds, a little bit of help is always appreciated—though it can be hard to come by at times.

We've begun to compile a list of organizations supplying loans, grants and funding with regard to weed management, as a starting point for funding and grant applications:

### Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority

- Resource Management Loans
  - ~ Non-means tested finance
  - ~ Lower rates than some financial institutions
  - ~ No fees or charges
- Freecall: 1800 623 946
- [www.qraa.qld.gov.au](http://www.qraa.qld.gov.au)

### FarmBis—federal and state government initiative

- Financial assistance by subsidising training activities for eligible applicants from various fields, including agriculture, aquaculture and natural resource management
- Participation is not means or viability tested
- Phone: 1800 686 175
- [www.farmbis.gov.au](http://www.farmbis.gov.au) follow the links to your state branch

### Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal

- Small Grants for Small Rural Communities
  - ~ Aimed at rural and remote communities

- ~ Simple application process
- ~ Supporting areas experiencing drought
- ~ Encouraging retention of youth in rural areas
- ~ Two rounds per year: Closing 28 March and 30 September 2008
- Phone: 1800 170 020
- [www.frrr.org.au](http://www.frrr.org.au) follow the “Current Funding Round” links on the right side of the page

For more grants in your particular state or territory, please go to:

- [www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/sp/spgrants.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/sp/spgrants.htm)
- [www.grantslink.gov.au](http://www.grantslink.gov.au)



## Corrections — Issue 2

In our last Lantana Lowdown, Stephanie Lymburner wrote a story on suggested replacement plants for lantana, in which there were a couple of typing errors and omissions:

- A fact sheet on the selection of replacement plants for frugivorous

birds is also available on the Weeds CRC website: [www.weeds.crc.org.au](http://www.weeds.crc.org.au).

- The genus name for *R. rosifolius* and *R. hillii* should have been entered as *Rubus*.

The editor sincerely apologises for any inconvenience these may have caused.



## Contacts

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### Stay tuned for future issues:

- Vegetation management
- Survey results
- Case studies