

NATIONAL
REVIEW OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE
BLACKBERRY STRATEGIC PLAN
(2005 – 2006)

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BLACKBERRY STRATEGIC PLAN

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BLACKBERRY STRATEGIC PLAN 2005 - 2006

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* L. agg. et al) comprises 23 invasive and 11 native *Rubus* species in Australia and is an already established weed that threatens both environmental and agricultural lands. Blackberry has probably reached the climatic limits of its potential range in Australia, however individual species may spread further and increase in density within these climatic limits.

The three main Goals of the National Blackberry Strategy (NBS) (2001) are to: prevent further spread of different Blackberry species, contain existing infestations and to rehabilitate treated areas to prevent reinfestation.

The National Blackberry Taskforce (NBT) which drives the implementation of the National Blackberry Strategy comprises representatives from all relevant stakeholders where Blackberry occurs as well as researchers, Agribusiness, and Universities.

All of the twenty-three actions in the NBS are well underway with at least 4 of the actions being completed. A review of the NBS to assess the overall degree of successful implementation of actions is to be undertaken in the remainder of 2006.

Major achievements achieved during 2005-2006 towards the NBS Goals

Goal 1 Prevent contains and rehabilitates blackberry infestations

NorthEast Blackberry Action Group – (NEBAG-UM) established in Victoria in the Upper Murray to effectively achieve Blackberry control work on private land and on adjacent roadsides. This group has undertaken herbicide trials / demonstration sites and trials for pasture re-establishment post blackberry removal. See Figures 3-7.

- Actions to achieve total eradication of Blackberry on Flinders Island Tasmania

Goal 2: Adoption of “best practice” management

- Lucid key (CD-Rom) for *Rubus spp.* identification completed and operational. Training workshops to use the Lucid key / CDRom for the identification of the different *Rubus spp.* held in NSW, ACT, Vic, SA.
- The distribution of the different Blackberry species in WA was mapped.
- 8 new Rust strains were released in WA where it has established well and is very effective at two sites. All Blackberry species tolerant to the Blackberry rust in WA were targeted for control and a buffer line separating the different species was established.

Goal 3: National commitment to the effective management of blackberries is maintained

- National Blackberry Taskforce (established in 2003) is operational; meeting 3 times in 2005/06
- Blackberry is a declared noxious weed in all States & Territories in Australia.
- DtWM Blackberry project applications coordinated with 23 Blackberry project applications received nationally & assessed by the NBT. 2 Projects were successful in receiving funds in 05/06.

Coordinated Blackberry Research

- Overseas exploration for potential additional biological control agents
- Blackberry Rust mass rearing program
- Release & monitoring of eight additional biological control rust strains in NSW, WA, Vic.
- Population genetics of Blackberry rusts and the genetic implications of the new rust genes.
- Impact and evaluation of Blackberry rust program in NSW, Vic, WA.

BLACKBERRY STRATEGIC PLAN 2005 - 2006

2. Introduction

Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* L. agg.) has been declared a Weed of National Significance (WoNS) because of its high degree of invasiveness and its substantial economic and environmental impacts. It is an already established weed that threatens both environmental and agricultural lands throughout Australia.

There are at least 23 invasive and 11 native *Rubus* taxa in Australia.

Blackberry has probably reached the climatic limits of its potential range in Australia, however individual species may spread further and increase in density within these climatic limits.

The Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) National Blackberry Strategy (NBS) was published in 2001 and highlights the major challenges of preventing further spread of different Blackberry species, containing existing infestations and the need to rehabilitate treated areas to prevent reinfestation

The vision of the strategy is that "Blackberry is managed effectively to prevent further spread and reduce the impact on all land across Australia". The strategy includes three goals, and twenty-three actions.

The National Blackberry Taskforce (NBT) was formed in 2003 and comprises Representatives from six states and ACT plus Aust. Rubus Growers Assoc. (ARGA) and National Weeds Facilitator. The group also has technical expertise from researchers, (eg. CSIRO), Agribusiness, and Universities. Its role is to drive the implementation of the National Blackberry Strategy.

The Victorian Department of Primary Industries hosts the National Blackberry Coordinator who acts as executive officer for the NBT and is responsible to ensure that the strategy is effectively managed. Members of the National Blackberry Taskforce are listed in Appendix 3.

Major achievements of the NBS to date (2005) have included:

- A National Blackberry Research Summit (2004),
- The release & monitoring of eight additional biological control rust strains,
- Studies of the population genetics of Blackberry rust ,
- Exploration of potential additional biological control agents ,
- Post-fire regeneration research and monitoring,
- Best practice herbicide use,
- Development of an electronic identification tool for blackberry species & training workshops for the identification key for *Rubus*,
- Mapping of blackberry extent, density, and taxa,
- Major Blackberry control undertaken in fire affected areas (post-January 2003 fires) & Blackberry identification and Management guides produced

This report outlines the actions that have been implemented during 2005-2006 in each state and the ACT to address the strategy, A comprehensive review of the NBS and subsequent work plan for the remainder of the NBS implementation is to be undertaken in 2006.

Sources of information

Information for this report was sourced from progress reports from each of the States represented on the NBT.

Acronyms used are expanded in Appendix 2.

Review of Actions

For each Strategy and Action, information was collected on recent achievements, current activities, and plans. Publications produced are noted in Appendix 3.

Financial inputs

Budget tables could not be completed as reliable data was not available.

3. Review of Actions

Highlights in 2005-2006

ACT:

- New pest plant legislation was introduced in the ACT in 2005. The act is referred to as the *Pest Plant and Animal Act, 2005*. Under the Act, Blackberry is referred to as a Category 3 pest plant which is a pest plant that "must be contained" {declaration made under 7(2)(c)}.
- Blackberry control was undertaken in priority areas that included fire affected riparian corridors and former *Pinus radiata* plantation areas

NSW

- Training in identification of blackberry species using the Lucid key was conducted for all relevant Local Government Weeds Officers (Local Government implements noxious weed legislation in NSW). Each Council where blackberries occur has a copy of the CD - Rom.
- Comprehensive data for mapping blackberry occurrence throughout NSW was collected
- Legislation prohibiting the sale, purchase and distribution of Blackberry plants and fruit enacted Blackberries are declared noxious in all shires where they occur and are one of the major noxious weed programs in this state.

Victoria

Victorian Blackberry Taskforce (VBT) re-convened to include full complement of members. Meetings held in February and April 2005. VBT Executive Officer appointed in December, 2005 – Andy Wernert, DPI Tallangatta

- Achievements in 2005-06 were successful media coverage including radio interviews and media articles in "The Weekly Times" and local print media.
- Meeting with Minister for Agriculture Mr Bob Cameron resulting in extra \$40,000 funding for on ground works.

North East Blackberry Action Group – Upper Murray (NEBAG-UM) established as a pilot group for blackberry management and establishes effective cooperative partnerships with relevant stakeholders to effectively achieve Blackberry control work on private land and on adjacent roadsides.

NEBAG-UM project includes herbicide application demonstration site.

- NEBAG-UM project includes trial for pasture re-establishment post blackberry removal.

TAS

- On ground Blackberry control continued in the priority eradication areas of Flinders Island and Southwest Tasmania, including Maatsuyker Island.
- A number of Blackberry sites on Flinders Island have now been eradicated and are on target for total eradication,
- The cover of blackberries in SW Tasmania has been greatly reduced with a few more years of treatment still required. T

SA

- A map of blackberry density by Hundred (the cadastral unit used in South Australia) has been compiled by the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Animal and Plant Control group from data submitted by the Authorised officers (*See Map 5*)
- Lucid key for *Rubus* identification completed (Robyn and Bill Barker State Herbarium of South Australia, DEH) and training in its use has been conducted and more is planned.

WA

- The new 8 Rust strains were released in late spring at 10 sites. It has established very well and at two sites it is causing a lot of damage to the Blackberry. See Figs 1-2.
- The distribution of Blackberry species was mapped.

- There are 3 main species – *R. anglocandicans* (European blackberry) around the south, *R. laudatus* (an American species) around Perth and odd patches of *R. ulmifolius* (European species). All species tolerant to the Blackberry rust (*R. laudatus* and *R. ulmifolius*) were targeted for spraying to control these species. All known *R. ulmifolius* infestations were sprayed. Nearly all infestations of *R. laudatus* in south of the state were sprayed and a buffer line separating *R. laudatus* and *R. anglocandicans* was established. In the western regions where there is only the one species (which is sensitive to rust) control continued as normal.

QLD

- Blackberry is spreading in QLD, eg. there are reports of Blackberry along the Toowoomba range (basalt soils and cool climate)
- The blackberry problem is concentrated around the shires of Stanthorpe and Warwick.
- The Warwick shire has an excellent weed management program where blackberry is one of the high priority weeds
- It is difficult to lift the profile of this weed species. Funding has been applied for to lift the profile of blackberry through mapping and increased awareness but was not successful

KEY ISSUES

The major challenges for blackberry management addressed in the WoNS National Blackberry Strategy (2001) are to:

- prevent the further spread of individual species
- contain infestations, and
- Rehabilitate treated areas to prevent reinfestation.

The blackberry leaf rust *Phragmidium violaceous*, which attacks the leaves, has been the most successful biocontrol so far. Although the rust has had a big impact on the more common and widespread blackberry strains, other strains are resistant, resulting in one strain replacing another, with no net decrease in blackberry cover. Matching virulent rust strains to susceptible blackberry species is essential for successful biological control. To address this issue, additional rust strains are being released to attack the resistant Blackberry strains /hybrids. Recent funding (through DtWM RD 2) will enable community groups to assist to disperse the new rust varieties across Australia.

In Victoria DPI are using the a Community Weed Model to facilitate community Blackberry Action groups to reduce Blackberry infestations, address the rate of spread of blackberries, and successfully rehabilitate land in their areas.

4. PERFORMANCE AGAINST STRATEGIC PLAN

National strategy actions and national rank have been extracted from the *Weeds of National Significance Blackberry (Rubus fruticosus agg.) Strategic Plan* (ARMC 2001). Responsibilities and performance indicators for applicable State/Territory agencies have been added.

STRATEGY 2.1 Prevent, contain and rehabilitate blackberry infestations

Desired Outcome: Reduce and mitigate the invasion of blackberry, and promote rehabilitation of significant production and natural ecosystems

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
2.1.1 Identify and prioritise blackberry infestations	<p>Assess current blackberry infestations in terms of cover, density and potential impacts on surrounding lands.</p> <p>Minimisation of strategic blackberry infestations by external or internal sources.</p> <p>Reduction of blackberry outbreaks by all landholders.</p>	State + Territory Governments & Land Managers	<p>Tas: Strategic regional prioritisation mechanisms in place Blackberry controlled widely across Tasmania including priority control sites such as eradication areas, South-west Tasmania and Flinders Island and priority threatened species sites such as Southport Island.</p> <p>Vic: North East Victoria identified for establishment of pilot community action group. North East Blackberry Action Group – Upper Murray (NEBAG-UM) established within Upper Murray Landcare Network Statewide distribution of current Blackberry infestations reviewed Current data and mapping obtained (see Maps 1-4) DPI working with retail industry to develop and implement a strategy to prevent the sale and distribution of key <i>Rubus</i> species in Victoria, and also to implement codes of practice to minimise the accidental spread of these taxa. (2002 – 2003)</p> <p>ACT: Priority areas identified and control undertaken in priority areas. Blackberry control undertaken in fire affected areas (post-January 2003 fires)</p> <p>SA: In June 2005 South Australia began managing natural resources through eight regional Natural Resource Management boards (NRM). Blackberry is a threat in five of the NRM regions but particularly in the SA Murray Darling basin NRM, Eyre Peninsula NRM, SouthEast NRM and the Adelaide and Mount lofty NRM region. Kangaroo Island the remaining NRM region affected has only an isolated infestation.</p> <p>A map of blackberry density by Hundred (the cadastral unit used in South Australia) has been compiled by the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Animal and Plant Control group from data submitted by the Authorised officers (See Map 5).</p> <p>NSW: Blackberry data collected for mapping blackberry occurrence throughout NSW on an extensive level.</p>	1

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
			<p>QLD: The blackberry problem in Old is concentrated in the SE of the State around the shires of Stanthorpe and Warwick. These areas are the cooler parts of the State and are ideal habitat for blackberry growth. Blackberry is spreading in QLD. It is difficult to lift the profile of this weed species. There has been reports of Blackberry along the Toowoomba range (basalt soils and cool climate)</p> <p>WA: Blackberry surveyed and 2 European and 1 American variety identified as the main weedy species. The distribution of the species was mapped. There are 3 main species – <i>R anglocandicans</i> (European blackberry) around the south, <i>R laudatus</i> (an American species) around Perth and odd patches of <i>R. ulmifolius</i> (a European species). <i>R. laudatus</i> has been targeted for chemical control as it is not susceptible to the new biocontrol agents. <i>R. ulmifolius</i> targeted as it is limited in distribution.</p> <p>10 new rust release sites in 2005/6, with a range of reactions at sites- some sites - very successful .05/06 was a good summer for rusts in WA as this new strain/s comes in early. Effective Rust on flowers.</p> <p><i>R. laudatus</i> and <i>R ulmifolius</i> was targeted for control by chemical means with \$200,000 from state govt to control these species which are tolerant to the Blackberry rust. All known <i>R. ulmifolius</i> infestations were sprayed. Nearly all infestations of <i>R. laudatus</i> in south of the state were sprayed and a buffer line separating <i>R. laudatus</i> and <i>R. anglocandicans</i> was established. Areas around Perth where it is the major species where treated normally.</p> <p>In the western regions where there is only the one species (which is sensitive to rust) control continued as normal. Chemical control of <i>R. anglocandicans</i> was relaxed on govt land to divert resources to the other species in the SW region. Infested private landholders were send letters in most situations but there was generally little follow up.</p> <p>The AG, through various grant programs such as Envirofund, Bushcare, DtWM, Fisheries Action Program, Coastcare, and National Landcare Program funded 127 on ground projects tackling Blackberry control.</p>	1

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.1.2 Assess the impacts of blackberry infestations</p>	<p>Identify the economic, environmental and social impacts and impediments to Blackberry management.</p> <p>Determine cost/benefit analysis for Blackberry management option(s).</p>	<p>State + Territory Governments Land Managers Community Groups</p> <p>State + Territory Governments CRC WMS Community Groups</p>	<p>WA: Ecological trial pilot sites looking at the effects of Blackberry on biodiversity were started. CSIRO have done some preliminary work and this indicates that blackberry infestations reduce the species diversity by more than 50%. Limited action due to lack of funding.</p> <p>SA: weed risk assessments conducted indicate that blackberry is a threat in five of the NRM regions but particularly in four; the SA Murray Darling basin NRM, Eyre Peninsula NRM, South East NRM and the Adelaide and Mount lofty NRM region.</p> <p>ACT: Impacts assessed in the development of control programs.</p> <p>Vic Research into Blackberry impacts on native vegetation . Identified opportunities for development and implementation of bio-control programs.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>2.1.3 Develop rehabilitation schemes</p>	<p>Investigate appropriate local vegetation to replace treated blackberry.</p> <p>Demonstrate revegetation methods as quickly as possible.</p>	<p>State + Territory Governments Greening Australia Land Managers Landcare other Community Groups</p>	<p>VIC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Weed Model approach to weed management adopted NEBAG-UM successful in obtaining funding via Tackling Weeds on Private Land initiative. Project targeting voluntary compliance with private landholders commenced in Burrowye and Walwa areas in Upper Murray District. Project is based on Community Weed Model principle. NEBAG-UM project includes herbicide application demonstration site. NEBAG-UM project includes trial for pasture re-establishment post blackberry removal. NEBAG-UM project based on establishment of cooperative partnerships with relevant stakeholders. <p>Tas: Rehabilitation guidelines have been developed for Tasmania in the Bushcare Toolkit.</p>	<p>2</p>

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.1.4 Minimise introduction of <i>Rubus</i> taxa which have potential to invade the Australian environment</p>	<p>Test each taxon proposed for importation into Australia for “weediness” before acceptance to import given.</p>	<p>AQIS <i>(Biosecurity Australia)</i></p>	<p>Vic Develop partnership with Australian Rubus Growers Association (ARGA). ARGA representative appointed to VBT, May 2006. ARGA also represented on the NBT .</p>	<p>1</p>

STRATEGY 2.2 Adoption of “best practice” management

Desired Outcome: Adoption of “best practice” management options, using CRC guidelines as a starting point

STRATEGY	ACTIONS (YEAR)	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.2.1 Identify additional “best practice” management options</p>	<p>Determine appropriate herbicides, the “best” methods and times to apply them, and liaise with states and chemical companies to register them.</p> <p>Assess biological control options and other integrated management options, eg. replacement by other preferred species, or grazing.</p>	<p>State + Territory Governments CRC WMS Industry</p> <p>State + Territory Governments CRC WMS</p>	<p>Vic NEBAG-UM project includes herbicide application demonstration site. <i>See Figures 3-6.</i></p> <p>WA: Strategies for managing weedy blackberry species in Western Australia paper written (See Refs)</p> <p>VIC: Under the Community Weed Model approach to weed management adopted, NEBAG-UM project includes trial for pasture re-establishment post blackberry removal based on establishment of cooperative partnerships with relevant stakeholders. <i>See Figure 7.</i></p> <p>ACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackberry control was undertaken in priority areas that included fire affected riparian corridors and former <i>Pinus radiata</i> plantation areas • Operational on ground works program early 2005 by ACT land management agencies in areas affected by bushfires 2003 	<p>1</p>

STRATEGY	ACTIONS (YEAR)	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.2.2 Identify and fill in gaps in knowledge</p>	<p>Gaps in knowledge are identified and research to elucidate knowledge needed is undertaken (eg. evaluate biological agents currently available in Australia).</p> <p>Re-evaluate management techniques in light of recent research.</p> <p>Monitor outcomes and compile data every two years to re-evaluate efficacy of techniques, impact levels, and chosen management methods.</p>	<p>State + Territory Governments CRC WMS Industry</p> <p>State + Territory Governments Industry Land Managers</p> <p>State + Territory Governments Industry Land Managers Community Groups</p>	<p>Lucid key (CD-Rom) for <i>Rubus species</i> identification completed (Robyn and Bill Barker State Herbarium of South Australia, DEH) and operational. See Figure 8 .</p> <p>Training workshops to use the Lucid key / CDRom for the identification of the different <i>Rubus</i> spp. held in NSW, ACT, Vic, SA and Tas.</p> <p>WA New biocontrol rusts released Rust released in late spring at 10 sites. It has established very well and at two sites it is causing a lot of damage to the Blackberry. SCRIPT (the south coast NRM) is providing funds for technical assistance The strain causing the damage is not known for sure. It is showing great promise and apart from Bridal Creeper rust, it is the best biocontrol of Blackberry seen. Limited follow up as WA component of CSIRO blackberry rust program was not funded</p> <p>SA A map of blackberry density by Hundred (the cadastral unit used in South Australia) has been compiled by the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Animal and Plant Control group from data submitted by the Authorised officers . See Map 5.</p> <p>NSW Conducted training for all relevant local government weeds officers (Local Government implements noxious weed legislation in NSW) in identification of blackberry species using the Lucid key. Each Council where blackberries occur has a copy of the CD - Rom.</p> <p>Tas: Blackberry taxa present in Tasmania identified and preliminary mapping undertaken of their distribution .</p> <p>ACT Lucid Training undertaken by ACT Government land management agencies</p>	<p>1</p>

STRATEGY	ACTIONS (YEAR)	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.2.3 Implementation of “best practices”</p>	<p>Communicate with land managers and set targets at realistic levels.</p> <p>Develop criteria for selection of appropriate management options</p>	<p>State + Territory Governments Regional Managers Land Managers</p> <p>CRC WMS Regional Managers Land Managers</p>	<p>QLD The Warwick shire has an excellent weed management program where blackberry is one of the high priority weeds.</p> <p>Tas: Blackberry controlled widely across Tasmania including priority control sites such as eradication areas, Southwest Tasmania and Flinders Island and priority threatened species sites such as Southport Island.</p> <p>Vic: NEBAG-UM has used the Community Weed Model approach to undertake a project with private landholders to set targets and enter into 3 year management contracts to achieve these targets for Blackberry control; in the in Burrowye and Walwa areas of the Upper Murray district. NEBAG-UM participation in the DPI Practice Change project. The DPI Practice Change Decision Support Framework project aims to establish a framework for implementation of the Community Weed Model, using the NEBAG-UM blackberry project as a pilot.</p> <p>SA: Routine inspections of properties by local Natural Resource Management Board Authorised officers has continued as in previous years, with treatment of blackberry on road reserves and crown lands, and the issuing of legal notices as necessary to enforce control on private lands. This work is done under the Natural Resource Management Act of 2004. Under the Act landholders are obliged to control any infestations on their land. It is also prohibited to sell or transport any declared species.</p> <p>ACT: On-ground efforts concentrated on new incursions and scattered / isolated infestations.</p>	<p>2</p>

STRATEGY	ACTIONS (YEAR)	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
2.2.4 Establish and implement a communication plan	Develop and implement extension methods.	State Governments Regional Managers CRC WMS Community	<p>A Draft Communication Plan for the NBS has been prepared and has been reviewed by NBT members. Various actions from the Draft are being implemented such as :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media articles. • Information on the NBS and the NBP prepared and contributed for WoNS Extension material. • Announcement and promotion of the 2 successful Blackberry Defeating the Weed Menace 2005-0 projects. • Articles in and promotion of the National Blackberry Program /Taskforce in the NBP Newsletter, - Issues 1-3. (Issue 4 in prep). • Displays and posters on Blackberry (and how the Community Weed model is being used for controlling Strategy to various stakeholders and other groups. <p>TAS Land manager recognition occurring through inclusion of blackberry in general weed education programs eg web resources, weed management strategy groups, weed education materials etc. The Tasmanian government has also communicated with the honey industry whom perceive adverse impacts from blackberry control</p> <p>Vic Raised awareness of Blackberry status, impacts to agricultural production and best practice management techniques. Promoted Community Weed Model across Victoria VBT Chairperson and Executive Officer attended community forum in Goulburn-Broken Catchment Management area to inform of process implemented in Upper Murray District by NEBAG-UM. Numerous media activities undertaken to promote NEBAG-UM and Community Weed Model Qld: There is a need to lift the profile of blackberry through mapping and increased awareness. A "Defeating the Weeds Menace" project was submitted to increase awareness of Blackberry .</p> <p>ACT: Distribution of extension and communication material eg. WONS Blackberry Factsheet at a number of forums.</p> <p>Distribution of the WONS Blackberry Weed Management Guide to NSW, SA for extension events.</p>	2
2.2.5 Establish evaluation code	Assess the resulting density and distribution of blackberry infestations after treatment.	State + Territory Governments Regional Managers Land Managers	<p>Vic NEBAG project includes trial for pasture re-establishment post blackberry removal and herbicide application trials and demonstration sites. <i>See Figures 3-7.</i></p>	3

* Universities may also be able to contribute to several actions.

STRATEGY 2.3 National commitment to the effective management of blackberries is maintained

Desired Outcome: Ongoing coordinated commitment to blackberry management is established and maintained by the Australian community

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.3.1 An on-going national blackberry taskforce is established</p>	<p>Appropriate representatives are nominated, and a national Taskforce established within 1 year</p> <p>Taskforce nominees to familiarise themselves with the proposed Terms of Reference (Appendix 2)</p>	<p>State/Territory Governments</p> <p>NBT</p>	<p>National Blackberry Taskforce (NBT) established in 2003 which has an independent chair with representatives from six states and ACT plus Aust. Rubus Growers Assoc. (ARGA) representative and National Weeds Facilitator.</p> <p>NBT also includes Associate / Watching Brief members such as researchers, (CSIRO), Agribusiness, Universities and Rubus IDO.</p> <p>One face-to-face meeting and 2 teleconferences of the NBT held (Aug, Oct, and Nov).</p> <p>New NBC appointed in April 2005 (FTE 0.5) to coordinate NBT & to oversee implementation of the NBS.</p> <p>NBT Terms of Reference and charter of operations reviewed by NBT.</p>	<p>1</p>

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.3.2 Blackberry is recognised as an important noxious weed by the states and territories, local governments, and other land managers</p>	<p>Blackberry's current status is Reviewed throughout Australia, and its control legislatively tightened where necessary.</p>	<p>Taskforce + State/Territory Governments + LG + Land managers</p>	<p>Blackberry is a declared noxious weed in all States & Territories in Australia.</p> <p>Tas: mechanisms for recognition of the importance of Blackberry in Tasmania completed through declaration and NRM Weed Strategies.</p> <p>SA Under the Natural Resource Management Act of 2004. Landholders are obliged to control any Blackberry infestations on their land. It is also prohibited to sell or transport any declared species.</p> <p>ACT: New pest plant legislation was introduced in the ACT in 2005. The act is referred to as the <i>Pest Plant and Animal Act, 2005</i>. Under the Act, Blackberry is a Category 3 Pest Plant. All Category 3 Pest plants "must be contained" {declaration made under 7(2)(c)}.</p> <p>NSW. Passed and commenced legislation prohibiting the sale, purchase and distribution of Blackberry plants and fruit in NSW.</p> <p>Blackberries are declared noxious in all shires where they occur and are one of the major noxious weed programs in this state.</p> <p>Vic Develop partnership with Australian Rubus Growers Association (ARGA). ARGA representative appointed to VBT, May 2006. DPI working with retail industry to develop and implement a strategy to prevent the sale and distribution of key <i>Rubus</i> species in Victoria, and also to implement codes of practice to minimise the accidental spread of these taxa. (2002 – 2003)</p>	<p>1</p>

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.3.3 Identify the different land managers with responsibilities for blackberry management, and develop cooperative links</p>	<p>Recognise the different land managers that need to control Blackberry infestations.</p> <p>Develop cooperative links between these differing land managers.</p>	<p>Taskforce + State/Territory + Local Governments + Land managers</p>	<p>ACT Land managers identified and cooperative programs developed. Liaison with rural lessees and adjoining landholders to coordinate blackberry control programs in priority areas. On-ground efforts concentrated on scattered infestations and new incursions. Impacts assessed in the development of control programs.</p> <p>Tas: Ongoing action through WeedPlan and NRM regional Weed management Strategies and subsidiary weed strategy groups. Using existing cooperative links through natural resource management programs and the State WeedPlan.(2003-04) Steering group overseeing delivery of WONS strategy ensures cooperative links are maintained. As part of the NWP project 65 management agreements have been negotiated with landholders</p> <p>Vic Promotion of the Community Weed Model approach to blackberry management NEBAG-UM project based on establishment of cooperative partnerships with relevant stakeholders. Partnership approach to weed management promoted with various community groups by VBT</p> <p>SA Routine inspections of properties by local Natural Resource Management Board Authorised officers has continued as in previous years, with treatment of blackberry on road reserves and crown lands, and the issuing of legal notices as necessary to enforce control on private lands. This work is done under the Natural Resource Management Act of 2004.</p>	<p>2</p>

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTIONS	RANK
<p>2.3.4 National blackberry research programs are initiated and coordinated</p>	<p>As per research aspects of Goal 2.</p>	<p>State + Territory Governments CRC WMS Industry</p>	<p>National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseas exploration for potential additional biological control agents - Year 1 completed • Blackberry Rust mass rearing program (CSIRO) <p>Release & monitoring of eight additional biological control rust strains in NSW, WA, Vic, (CSIRO) See Figures 1-2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact and evaluation of Blackberry rust program in NSW (CSIRO) <p>DtWM Blackberry project applications coordinated. 23 Blackberry DtWM Rd 2 project applications assessed by the NBT. 2 Projects were successful in receiving funds in 05/06. Active promotion of DtWM Research & Development 1st call (targeted call) to relevant research stakeholders and Promotion of other fund sources for implementation of NBS actions. Promotion of Defeating the Weeds Menace-Round 2 funding calls. Coordination of NBT assessment of Blackberry-related Defeating the Weeds Menace (Round 2) projects (Nov 2005). Active promotion of the successful results/Blackberry projects funded by Defeating the Weeds Menace-Round 2. National Blackberry Research Summit (2004)</p> <p>Vic</p> <p>4 research projects implemented .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determining the effects of Blackberry rust (3 research sites) in its 2nd year. - TWOPL (DSE/DPI) Blackberry Rust mass rearing program & 75 rust release sites (DPI) - Research into Blackberry impacts on native vegetation. - Post-fire Blackberry regeneration research and monitoring (2004/05/06) . <p>Research into Blackberry impacts on native vegetation (2004/05) Best practice herbicide use of Blackberry in riparian areas. (2004/05).</p> <p>TAS</p> <p>Population genetics of Blackberry rusts and the genetic implications of the new rust genes (Univ. of Tas).</p>	

BLACKBERRY STRATEGIC PLAN – TOTAL BUDGET

BLACKBERRY STRATEGIC PLAN TOTAL BUDGET	2001 /2	2002/ 3	2003 /4	2004 /5	2005/6
Prevent, contain and rehabilitate blackberry infestations Budget					
Adoption of “best practice” management Budget					
National commitment to effective management Budget					
TOTAL					

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APPENDIX 1 : ACRONYMS USED

AG	Australian Government
DPI	Department of Primary Industries (Vic)
DPIW	Department of Primary Industries, and Water (Tas)
DSE	Department of Sustainable Environment (Vic)
DtWM	Defeating The Weed Menace
GA	Greening Australia
IDO	Industry Development Officer
NBC	National Blackberry Coordinator
NBP	National Blackberry Program
NBS	National Blackberry Strategy (2001)
NBT	National Blackberry Taskforce
NSW Ag	New South Wales Agriculture
TCT	Tasmania Conservation Trust
TWOPL	Tackling Weeds On Private Land Funding Program in Vic.
VBT	Victorian Blackberry Taskforce
VCMC	Victorian Catchment Management Council
WoNS	Weeds of National Significance

APPENDIX 2 – REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The National Blackberry Co-ordinator (NBC) gratefully acknowledges the assistance of all the state representatives on the National Blackberry Taskforce and others below in the preparation of this report .

Australian Capital Territory

Mr Geoff Price, Rural Programs Officer, Environment ACT.

New South Wales

Philip Blackmore Regional Coordinator (Weeds) NSW Dept of Primary Industries

South Australia

Dennis Gannaway , National Asparagus Weed Management Coordinator

Tasmania

Tim Rudman,

Flora Conservation Officer, Vegetation Conservation Section, Department of Primary Industries & Water.

Western Australia

Mr John Moore,

Weed Science, Department of Agriculture Western Australian

Queensland

Graham Hardwick, Principal, Land Protection Officer ,DNRM - QLD

Victoria

The Victorian information was collated by

Mr. Andy Wernert

Executive Officer - Victorian Blackberry Taskforce

Department of Primary Industries

And information was supplied by:

Dr. Robin Adair – DPI Victoria

Dr. Nigel Ainsworth- DPI Victoria

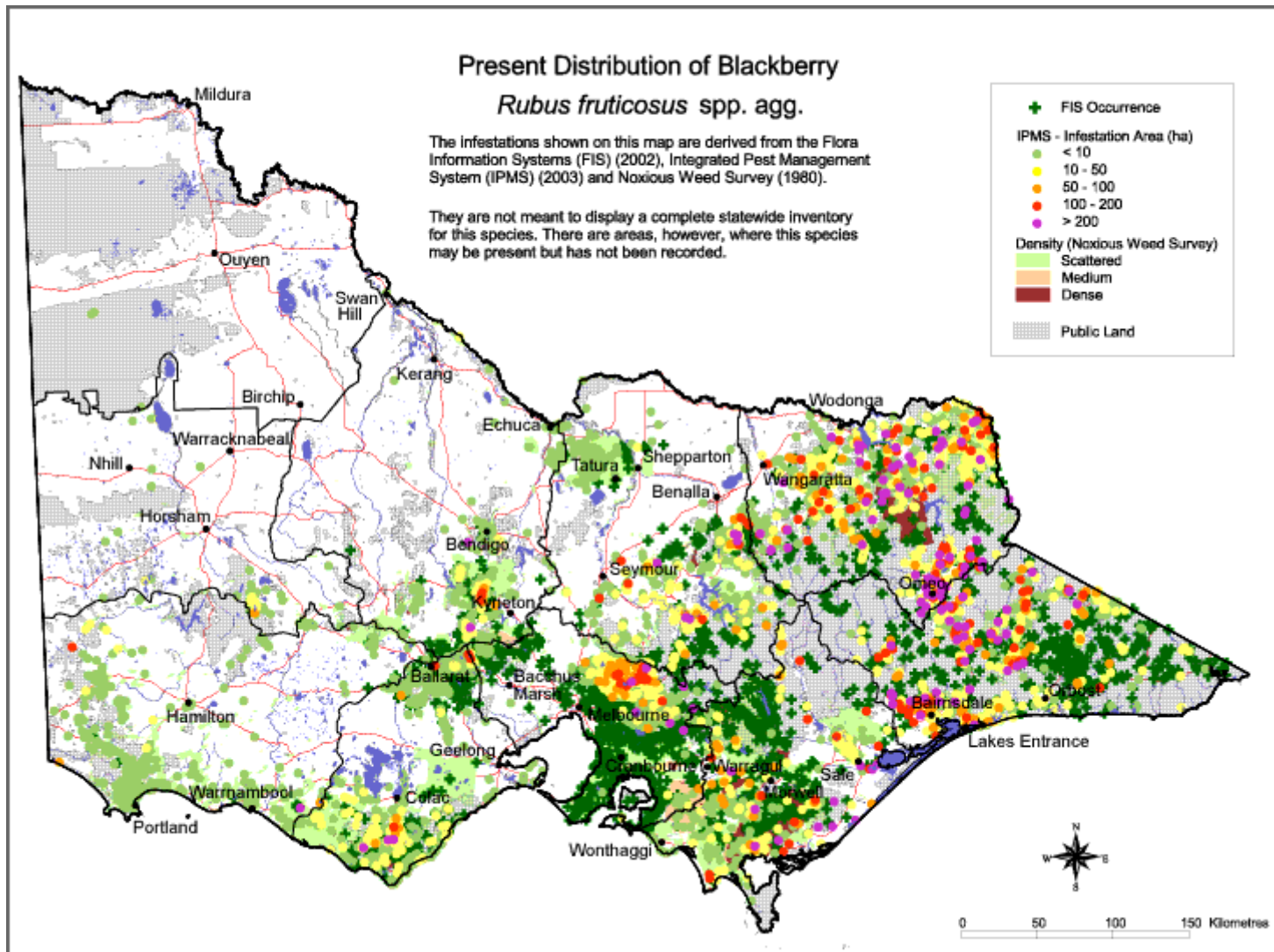
Dr. Fiona Ede- DPI Victoria

Appendix 3: National Blackberry Taskforce Members during 2005-2006.

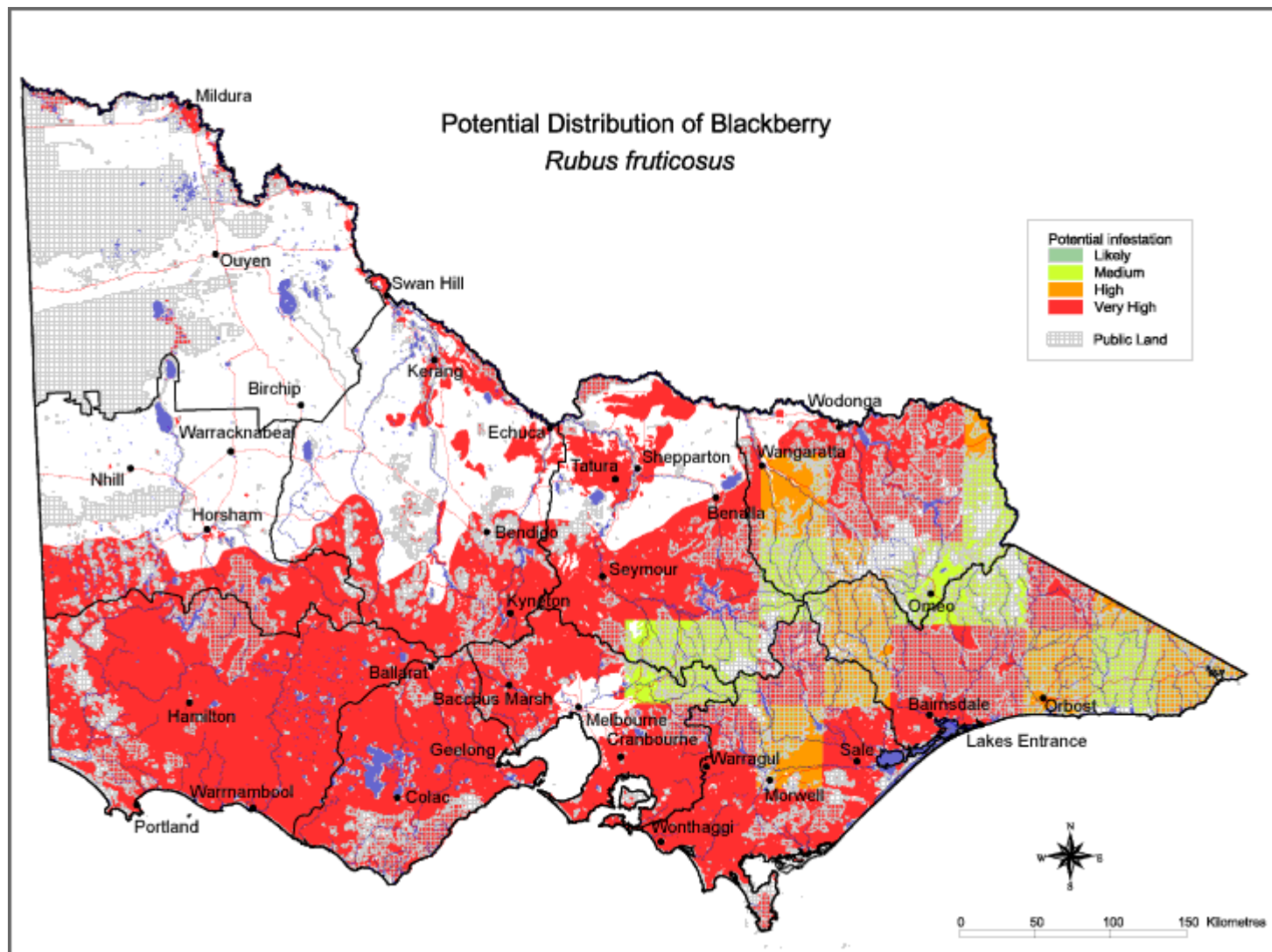
Alex Arbuthnot Chairman, NBT
Penny Richards National Blackberry Coordinator
Philip Blackmore Regional Coordinator Weeds, NSW DPI
Dennis Gannaway Weed Management Coordinator DWLBC
Graham Hardwick Principal Land Protection Officer, DNRM - QLD
John Moore Department of Agriculture (WA)
Geoff Price Environment ACT
Phil Rowe Australian Rubus Growers Association . (ARGA)
Christian Goninon Principal Weed Management Officer, Dept of Primary Industries and Water Tasmania
John Thorp National Weeds Management Facilitator

Associate Members / Watching Brief Members

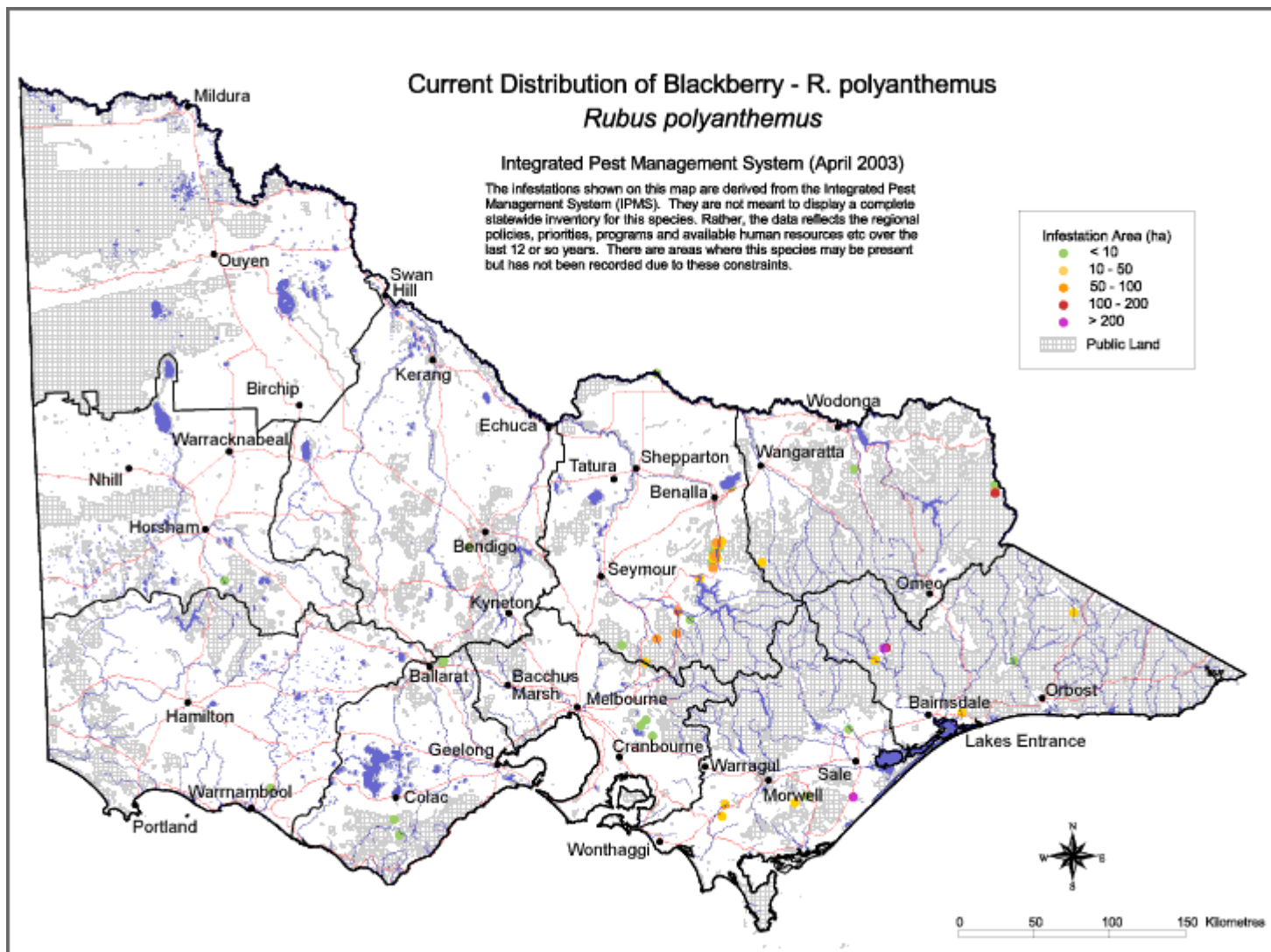
Dr Kathy Evans University Of Tasmania
Dr Louise Morin CSIRO Research, A.C.T.
Mr Jim Phimister Dowagrosciences
Ms Alison Brinson DPI (*Rubus* IDO)



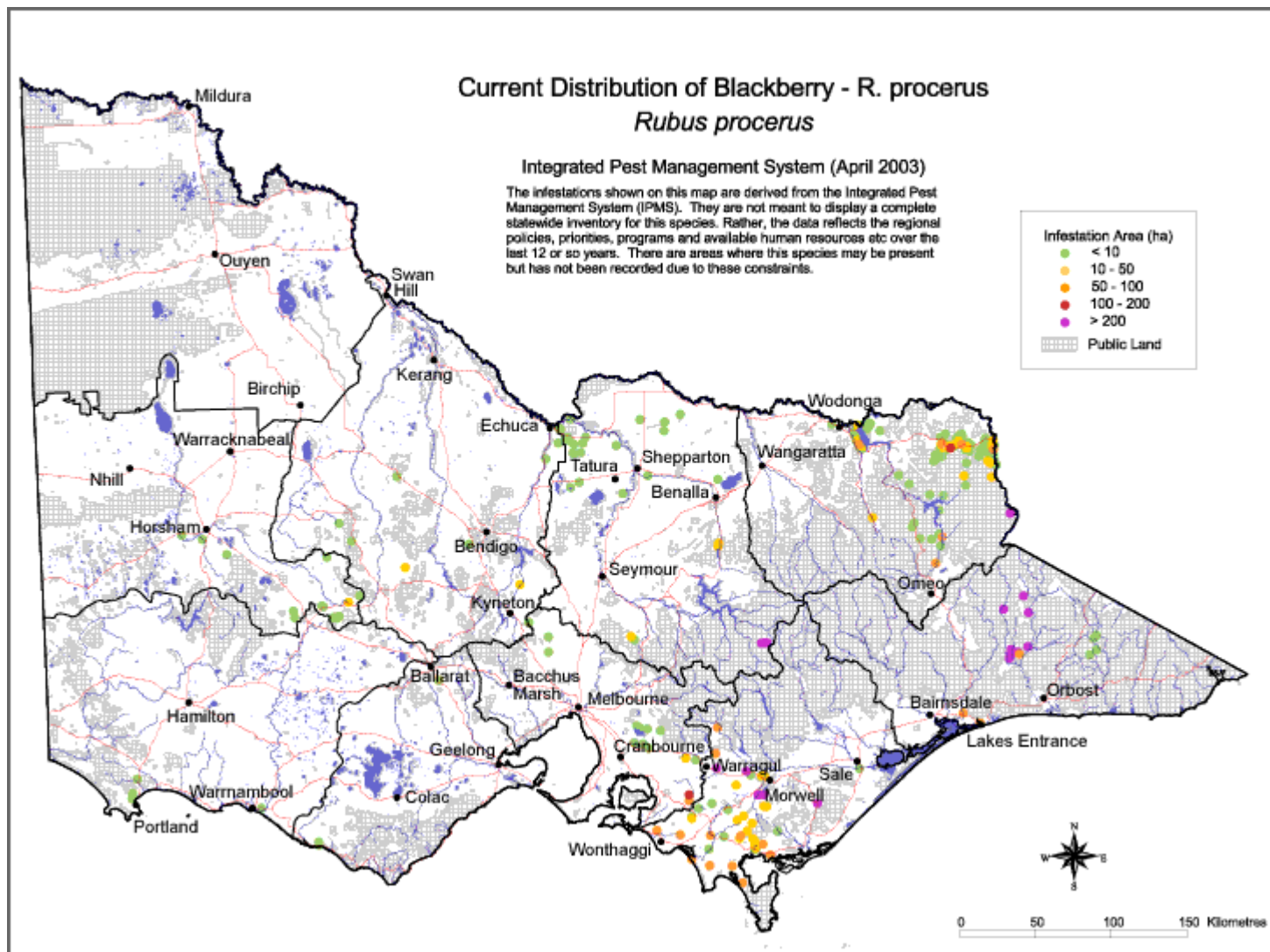
Map 1 Victorian distribution and density of Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* spp. agg.). (2003)



Map 2 : The potential distribution of Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* spp. agg) in Victoria.

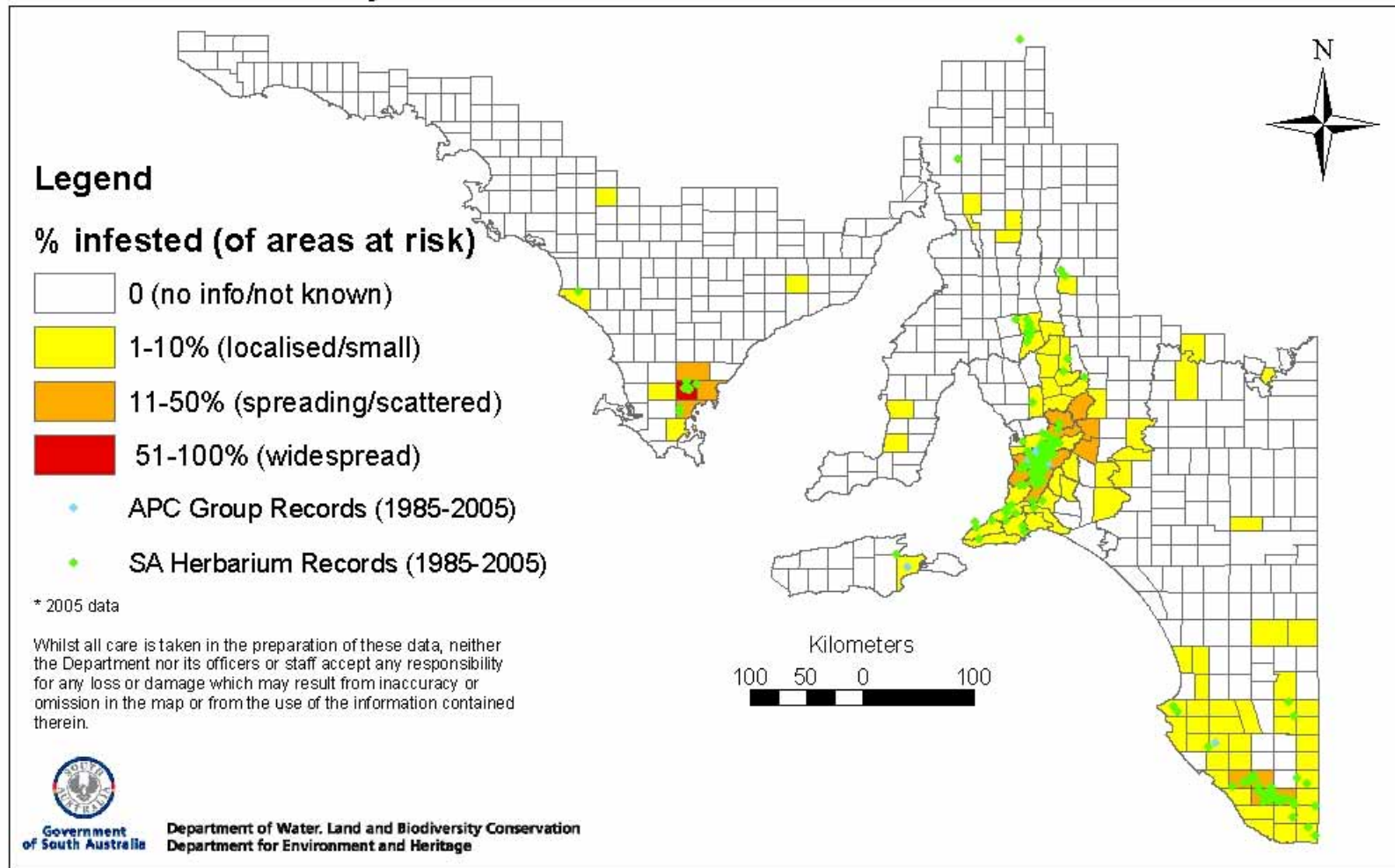


Map 3 : The distribution of Blackberry (*Rubus polyanthemus*) in Victoria (2003).

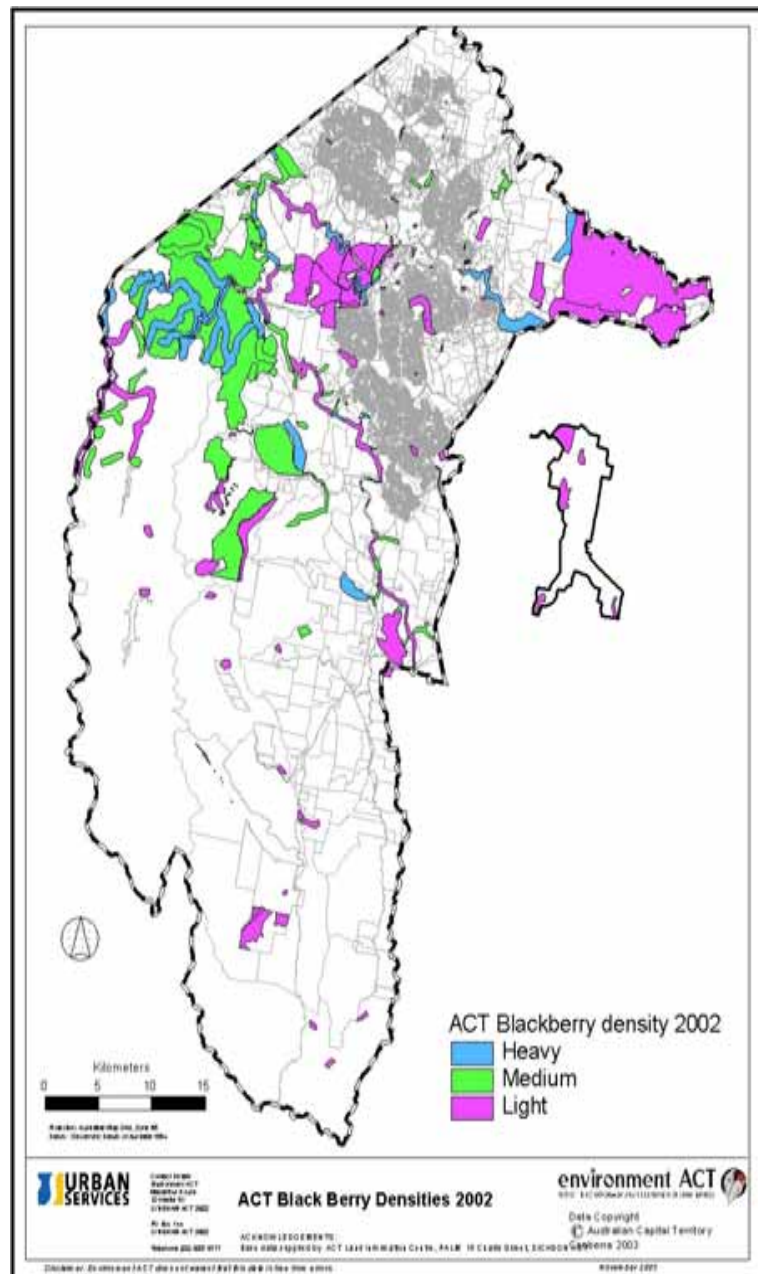


Map 4 : The distribution of Blackberry (*Rubus procerus*) in Victoria (2003).

**Infestation Level of *Rubus* spp.
(BLACKBERRY)
by Hundreds in the State of South Australia. ***



Map 5 : Distribution and density of Blackberry (all *Rubus* spp.) in South Australia. (2005) .



Map 6 : Distribution and density of Blackberry in the ACT (2002) .

Photos of the new Blackberry rust release in WA. 2005-2006-



Figure 1. . Effects of the new Blackberry rust release in WA .Millions of spores of the New Blackberry rust strains are released from the underside of Blackberry leaves that were infected by the CSIRO and DAFWA only a few months earlier
Photo: John Moore, Dept of Agriculture, Weed Science, WA



Fig 2. Effects of the new Blackberry rust release in WA .Heavy rust infections result in desiccation and death of leaves.
Photo: John Moore, Dept of Agriculture, Weed Science, WA

Victorian North- East Blackberry Action Group project in the Upper Murray catchment includes herbicide application demonstration sites.



Figure 3 Landholder Sandy Hill marks out a trial plot prior to herbicide treatment
Photo: Andy Wernert, Victorian Blackberry Taskforce, Department of Primary Industries
Tallangatta,



Figure 4 :The same site after herbicide treatment, 7 months later.

Photo: Andy Wernert, Victorian Blackberry Taskforce, Department of Primary Industries, Tallangatta,



Figure 5: DSE Forest Management Officer Arthur Scholz records another herbicide trial site.

Photo: Andy Wernert, Victorian Blackberry Taskforce, Department of Primary Industries Tallangatta,



Figure 6 : The same site post herbicide treatment some 7 months later.

Photo: Andy Wernert, Victorian Blackberry Taskforce, Department of Primary Industries Tallangatta,



Figure 7 : Victorian Blackberry Taskforce Chairperson Lyn Coulston (right) and Executive Officer Andy Wernert from DPI, inspect a large Blackberry infestation with the view to establishing it as a pasture rehabilitation trial site at Burrowye in the Upper Murray.

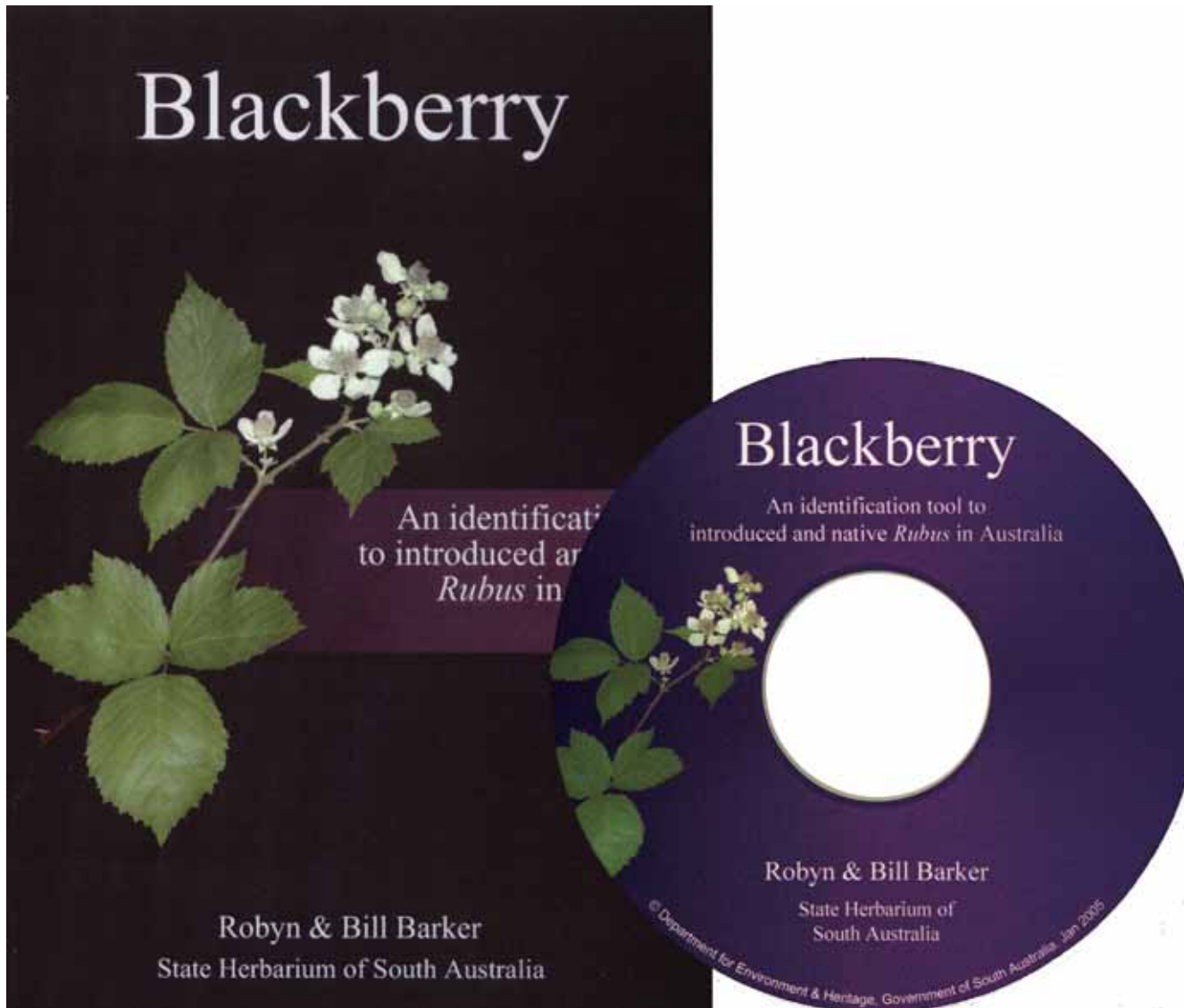


Figure 8 : The Lucid key (CD-Rom) for *Rubus species* identification by Robyn and Bill Barker State Herbarium of South Australia, and DEH.