



# The Australian Sandalwooder

Welcome to the 13th issue of the Australian Sandalwooder, a  
produced by the Australian Sandalwood Network Inc.

Winter 2011

## From the Chair

Bruce Storer, ASN Chairman

There has been much activity over the last few months. A funding application to WBNRM for 100 ha of demonstration sites in the NE wheat belt has been successful. To manage this project a NE subcommittee of the ASN has been formed.

Further applications to royalties for regions to establish Mt Marshall Sandalwood (read more inside) has been made possible by the efforts of members Andrew Robinson and Debra Rule who have produced a fantastic business plan as the basis for the application. Two workshops will be held in Mt Marshall during September to get the community involved. An application to Caring for Country community grants has also been made to undertake training for direct seeding. Thanks to Monica for doing that.

As you will see in the news letter our AGM is being held down south this year. Geoff Woodall has organised some wonderful visits for us so I hope this will attract our southern members to attend as well as others in the central wheat belt. If numbers justify we will get a bus from Northam for this. Nominations are needed for all positions on the committee so please consider putting your hand up. Being on the committee is not too onerous as many of our meetings are held by phone. Members might like to consider that we also set up a south east committee so that members can organise their own events and meetings with admin support from the Exec officer.

Our tour of Wescorp although cancelled a couple of times will now be held in October, we are waiting for a date to be confirmed.

The season has turned out quite well and despite a late break we have had rain falling in all parts of the wheat belt although it is still below average in most places. Pleasing to this point is that we have not had any not hard frosts. In the central wheatbelt due to prolific flowering and the rain trees have set lots of seed. Many host trees are flowering well so let's hope they set good seed too.

## Workshops

### Mt Marshall Sandalwood

9:30am Thursday 8 September

'The Function Room'

Mukinbudin Recreation Centre

9:30am Friday 9 September

Bencubbin Recreation Centre

Be part of the change. RSVP to Bethan

Lloyd **9574 5882** or

**exec@sandalwood.org.au** by Wednesday  
August 31st 2011.

***Disclaimer:** the information in this newsletter may be of assistance to you. The ASN executive committee and newsletter editor do not guarantee that this newsletter is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability from any error loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication*



Wondered if any members have seeds splitting on the tree like these and if anyone knows why it happens

## Mt Marshall Sandalwood Project – reconnecting the landscape with biodiverse sandalwood plantings

There is great excitement in the Shire of Mt Marshall in the eastern wheatbelt. The Shire has tagged itself 'the Sandalwood Shire' as sandalwood originally grew extensively through the area and was the impetus for settling the region. Like so many areas that have been cleared due to government policy of the time, too late it was noticed that some soils were just not suitable for European-style agriculture. In the Mt Marshall Shire, and indeed much of the eastern wheatbelt, the fragile, aluminium toxic wadjil sands often do not provide a return for the level of inputs the farmer uses. Now that the land is cleared it blows if left without cover, it can let excess rain through causing salinity lower in the landscape and is generally unproductive for broadacre agriculture. In addition, the area has suffered several years of drought. In 2010, their usual annual rainfall of 330mm was down to 110mm, much of which did not fall in the growing season for crops.

However local farmers have been finding that these soils grow excellent sandalwood, and we all know that trees can use water at any time of the year.

As part of the recent Master TreeGrower Program, participants attended a facilitated workshop along with farmers and representatives from the Mt Marshall Shire, Wheatbelt NRM and the Department of Agriculture and Food WA (DAFWA). A significant outcome of the workshop was the commitment by the local community to plant 50,000 hectares of their agriculturally unproductive wadjil soils to biodiverse sandalwood systems. Not only will this provide a significant new area of habitat linking the landscape, but will also provide the resources for new local industries and additional income streams for land managers. We are grateful to MTG participants Debra Rule and Andrew Robinson who offered to take the outcomes from the workshop and form them into the basis of a Business Plan for the development of this landscape-scale project.

The Australian Sandalwood Network, through encouragement from expert practitioners such as Dr Geoff Woodall, are actively promoting biodiverse sandalwood systems – planting a mix of host species to create biodiverse habitats that will be productive with the addition of sandalwood. To reduce the establishment costs direct seeding techniques, along with planting a proportion of seedlings, will make the planting of these 50,000 hectares achievable.

The Australian Sandalwood Network (ASN), in conjunction with representatives from the Shire of Mt Marshall, has recently been granted funding through Wheatbelt NRM to establish dispersed 10 hectare demonstration sites with signage, capacity building workshops and training to 'kick-start' this large project.

Seed processing at Mt Marshall below



# 2011 Avon Master TreeGrower Program

During March and April, 15 intrepid land managers signed up for the 2011 Avon Master TreeGrower (MTG) Program. Not knowing what they had let themselves in for, they bravely showed up at a variety of far-flung locations throughout Perth and the northern Avon Wheatbelt. Ask them to be at the Koorda Hotel at 9:30 on a Sunday morning and everyone not only turned up but turned up early!

There was a strong bent towards Sandalwood on the course with participants able to visit each other's sites as well as those of some of the Avon Tree Crop Peer Mentors. Some Peer Mentors attended the entire course and were able to translate the information for sawlogs and high rainfall areas to sandalwood and low-rainfall conditions – well done in particular Ros Huxley who designed an excellent activity based on what had been presented.

Participants learned about the importance of genetics, site preparation, and management on the production of any tree crop site. They learned of new products on the horizon, of rules and regulations that need to be followed.

Participants were exposed to more than 18 experts in a range of fields from farm forestry to bioenergy and even had an opportunity to meet Rowan Reid, architect of the national MTG program, who came to WA twice to meet and present to participants.

The national MTG Program is an 8-day adult learning experience that includes the sharing of experiences and knowledge, not just from 'experts' but also between participants – everyone has something beneficial to share. The delivery is always a mix of class room type presentations and field visits.

Some comments from participants

- 'Day 1 - Do I have time for this? Day 7 - I can hardly wait!'
- 'Fabulous course, thanks'
- 'It has been a really positive experience to interact with presenters and participants. I've learnt such a lot and made some good friends'.

The 2011 8-day Avon course took place in two day blocks around Perth, West Dale/Brookton/York, Gabbin/Bencubbin and Wongan Hills/Goomalling/Dowerin over 4 weekends between March 11<sup>th</sup> and April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Funding for this MTG was granted to the WA Wheatbelt branch of the national body, Australian Forest Growers. Australian Government Caring for our Country funding came through Wheatbelt NRM's Community Grants program. We sincerely thank them for the opportunity. A special 3-day introductory MTG course is scheduled for August 2011 and will target broad acre farmers in the southern part of the Avon catchment. For more information or to book your place contact Monica Durcan at AVONGRO on 9291 8249 or email [mdurcan@inet.net.au](mailto:mdurcan@inet.net.au)



Marty and Connie Winch-buist, show off their sandalwood plantation near York to MTG participants. Geoff Woodall gives welcome advice and hints



Bob Huxley talking at the Bencubbin workshop

# **APPRAISAL OF VEGETATION TO IDENTIFY SPECIES GROWING IN ASSOCIATION WITH SANDALWOOD (*Santalum spicatum*) in SNAKE GULLY RESERVE**

Fiona Falconer, Land for Wildlife officer DEC, Coorow, [Fiona.falconer@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:Fiona.falconer@dec.wa.gov.au)

Snake Gully Nature Reserve A10351 which is located on Rabbit Proof Fence Road in the Shire of Dalwallinu. The area surrounding the reserve has been extensively cleared for agriculture. Where scattered unfenced remnants remain, species diversity has been reduced by grazing. The reserve is a valuable indicator of the complex mosaic of vegetation types that existed in the area prior to clearing for agriculture. Intact roadside remnant vegetation in the vicinity is also a valuable indicator by providing a linear transect across different landforms and soil types.

The area is within the Avon Botanical District the Wheatbelt in the Southwest Botanical Province. The area is within the Yarra Yarra sub region of the Northern Agricultural Region (NAR).

The Yarra Yarra Catchment has three main vegetation systems as described by Beard (1976, 1979, and 1980). These include the:

1. Guangan System. This accounts for the headwaters of the Yarra Yarra from Kirwin northwards to Pithara.
2. Jibberding System. This includes the eastern half of the catchment from Dalwallinu to the Koolanooka hills.
3. Perenjori System. This is the remaining western half of the catchment from Wubin to the Koolanooka hills and includes the towns of Perenjori, Morawa, Three Springs and Carnamah.

**The Jibberding and Perenjori Systems** These systems are described as having a simple sequence of soils ranging from yellow sandy soils over gravel on the higher ground, to red loams on the lower ground with saline grey soils along the drainage lines. As the Jibberding System is further east than the Perenjori system, floristic differences occur due to lower rainfall. The most obvious of these is that *Acacia* species dominate in the more eastern Jibberding sandplains as opposed to casuarinas in the Perenjori sandplains.

**Plant Communities** 5 plant communities were recognized based on vegetation structure and plant species.

**1. York Gum – Jam open woodland.** This community was located on the lower slope and valley floor on sandy loams over clay soils. Plants included *Eucalyptus loxophleba* (York Gum), *Acacia acuminata* (Jam), *Acacia assimilis* (Wodjil), *Acacia tetragonophylla* (Curara), *Acacia aestivalis*, *Acacia microbotrya* (Manna Gum), *Eremophila drummondii*, *Hakea recurva* Standback, *Melaleuca radula* (Graceful Honey Myrtle), *Dodonaea inaequifolia* (Hopbush), ***Santalum spicatum* (Sandalwood)**, native grasses (including *Austrostipa elegantissima*) & herbs (including *Waitzia acuminata*)

**2. Shrublands; *Acacia* sp – Black Tamma (*Allocasuarina acutivalvis*) – *Hakea* thicket** This community was located on the upper slopes on yellow sandy loam. Plants included *Acacia neurophylla* (Wodjil), *Acacia resinomarginea* (Old Man Wodjil), *Allocasuarina acutivalvis* (Black Tamma), *Hakea coriacea* (Pink Spike Hakea), *Melaleuca cordata*, *Grevillea paradoxa* (Bottlebrush Grevillea), *Petrophile* sp, ***Santalum spicatum* (Sandalwood)**, native grasses and herbs

**3. Rock Outcrops** Undulating area with some bare rock with lichen cover, *Borya* sp (Pincushions), *Acacia* sp, *Allocasuarina campestris* (Tamma), *Ecdeicola monostachya*, *Dianella* sp (Flax Lily), *Melaleuca* sp (Broombush), *Templetonia* sp, native grasses and herbs

**4. Gimlet Woodland** This community was located on the gently inclined valley floor on red clay/loam. Plants included *Eremophila drummondii*, *Hakea recurva* (Standback), *Olearia muelleri* (Dusky daisy bush), *Actinoble* sp (Camel Dung), other herbs and native grasses

**5. Mosaic: Shrublands; *Melaleuca* & *Dodonaea* with Mallee** This community was located on the lower slopes on red sandy loam over clay. Plants included *Eucalyptus leptopoda* (Tammin Mallee), *Eucalyptus loxophleba* (York Gum), *Melaleuca radula* (Graceful Honey Myrtle), *Santalum acuminatum* (Quandong), *Acacia acuminata* (Jam), *Dodonaea inaequifolia* (Hopbush), *Cheilanthes* sp (Rock Fern), native grasses and herbs

# Avondale Sandalwood Soil Conservation Project

Avondale Discovery Farm near Beverley has put in a sandalwood demonstration site with funding from WBNRM under their Soil Conservation Incentives Project. It is hoped this site will become provide interest to the many people who visit Avondale.

- 18 May            Site scarified
- 1 Jun             second scarify
- 16 Jun            Sprayed – Sprayseed @ 2L/Ha
- 17 Jun            Sown pasture mix – Yellow serradella charano and Biserrula and Alosca @ 19.5kg/Ha  
With fertiliser Whitstar Plus @ 100kg/Ha
- 6 Jul             Planted 3600 mixed acaicia (saligna, neurophylla, assimillis, resinomarginea, acuminata) host  
seedlings. Double rows planted 12m apart over a 5ha paddock.
- 10/11 Jul        Up to 9am 14.6ml fantastic steady soaking rain!
- Photos of the plot taken 6/7/2011. below



# Gt Southern Sandalwood Field Trip and AGM

## Friday 28th and 29th October 2011

**11:00:** Australian Sandalwood Network

AGM at the Borden pavilion, Chester pass rd

**12:00** Lunch

**1pm:** site visit to wild and 8year old cultivated sandalwood sites.

**5pm:** return to Stirling range retreat for Social bbq (accommodation available here)

**9am Saturday 29th** trip via Ongerup to

9yr old overstocked commercial biodiverse site to look a trial thinning operation underway and to 140ha Greening Australia, Spicatum resources direct seeded site at Peniup near Jerramungup.

Finish by 1pm

Cost \$25 for members

\$50 for non members

Please RSVP to Bethan Lloyd 9574 5882

By 7<sup>th</sup> October

Email [exec@sandalwood.org.au](mailto:exec@sandalwood.org.au)

If we have enough interest we may book a bus to

Leave from Northam at 7am on Friday morning



## Sandalwood Nut Harvester

The Nut Harvester is a time and labour saving tool designed to pick up nuts without bending or kneeling...Give your Back a Break. Ideal for Sandalwood.

Sole Australian Distributor: John Pethybridge.

Email: [John.Pethybridge@gmail.com](mailto:John.Pethybridge@gmail.com) Website: [www.nutharvester.com.au](http://www.nutharvester.com.au)

ph. 0407 847 170

# Wescorp expands sandalwood services to growers



Wescorp's new premises in Canning Vale

## Wescorp Sandalwood Pty Ltd.

### Sandalwood Plantation Services

All aspects of plantation planning, Maintenance and harvest are offered.

Plantation volume assessments, Wood sampling and laboratory analysis.

*Please call Grant Pronk*

*to discuss your needs – 040 988 2280*

Wescorp Sandalwood has had a long relationship with the Western Australian sandalwood industry dating back to 1994 when it won the Government contract to process and market sandalwood harvested from Crown land. Some 18 years later Wescorp remains a driving force in the world's sandalwood industry and through its agency agreement with the Forest Products Commission (FPC) has become the world's largest supplier of sandalwood products.

The company has evolved over this time and has built on its passion to deliver the best outcomes as required through its processing and marketing contract with the FPC. Today the new Wescorp sandalwood factory is based in Canning Vale and Wescorp continues to invest in new technologies, equipment and processes to best serve the industry and its people. Long-time Rangelands forester and government forest section manager Grant Pronk has joined the Wescorp team. His appointment broadens Wescorp's abilities to provide a range of professional services to all sandalwood growers.

Today sandalwood growers can benefit from Wescorp's expertise through a range of plantation services that are now offered. These services include all aspects of plantation management from planning to harvest to selling. Plantation stand assessments together with wood quality analysis performed in the Wescorp laboratory now provides growers with an insight to their plantation's growth and potential value.

Wescorp maintains its involvement in the developing sandalwood nut industry and are also interested in growers looking to sell nuts. For further enquires please contact Wescorp Sandalwood on 9455 5788.



# Broad Acre Tree Planting. Bev and Bruce Storer June 2011

We have just planted 20 Ha of a 40 Ha plot with sandalwood hosts, the remainder to be planted in 2012. Here are some of the observations made during planting.

1. In April the site was ripped to a depth of 18 inches. This was done with GPS guidance. This had a number of advantages. Firstly the total area was easily measured. Secondly, the twin row layout was precisely maintained. Rows 2.6 m apart, access lane width 7.4 m, giving 2 rows every 10 metres. Thirdly, ripping greatly improved soil moisture conditions in the rip line. The property is in the Mt. Marshall shire and mortality rates can be excessive to say the least. When undertaking larger areas seedling survival equals big dollars. Planting into a moist profile greatly increases survival.
2. Tree spacing 2m apart, giving 1000 stems per Ha. Each tree was accessible yet enjoyed some edge effect. Only one of the twin rows was planted in 2011, the other to be planted in 2012. This makes species mixing easier. Also, given the location, some risk spread against drought and/or disaster. Very costly exercise if all 40,000 trees are planted in a drought year.
3. A Chatfield tree planter was used and a light scalp was employed. A stroke of luck was that this particular tree planter crabbed a little and this meant that the scalped soil was discharged mainly on one side. The result was that there was no mound of dirt on the laneway side, just a gentle slope in towards the tree line. A "street sweeper" could then be used to clean laneways prior to nut harvesting without the hindrance of the mound of dirt. (See figure 1.) This leaves a flat surface right to the base of the tree, albeit on one side only.
4. Spraying of the plot are made easier with consistent row spacing's and vehicular access is a breeze. Any further mechanical operations should be easily undertaken with this layout. As the industry develops these issues will probably become more relevant.

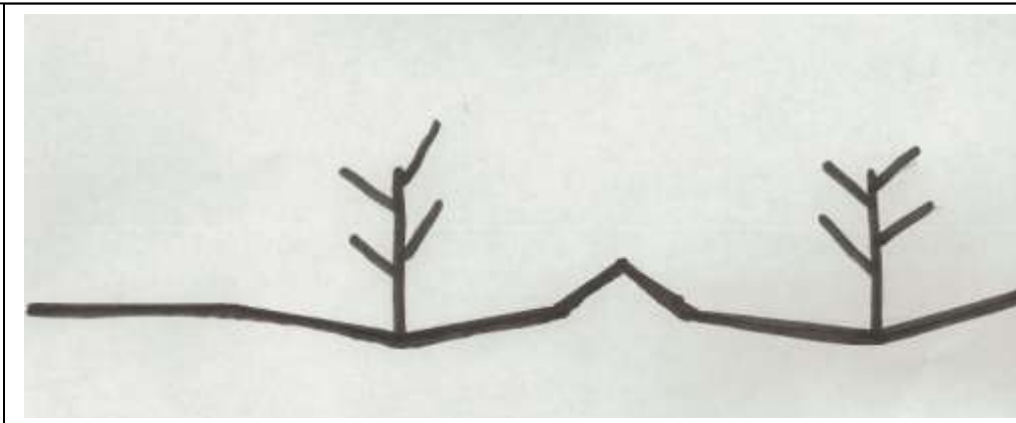


Fig 1



**New member on the ASN  
Executive committee**

**Profile on Ben Sawyer from FPC**

I was brought up on a small farm in the Porongurup's, studied Environmental Science at a tertiary level and have worked in the forestry field through the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) then Forest Products Commission (FPC) from its formation. I have been involved in sandalwood for 15 years since being employed by CALM as the Sandalwood Inventory Officer. The position was to measure wild sandalwood in the Rangelands using the data to make estimates of total population.

More recently I have been responsible for the sustainability of wild sandalwood. The centre piece of which was the introduction and development of the Operation Woylie research program to trial and instigate methods to establish sandalwood in the low rainfall Rangeland environment.

At present I am the Manager for Arid Forests Branch of the FPC responsible for the harvest, regeneration and marketing of The State's wild sandalwood resource. Arid Forests Branch is eight highly motivated and passionate people directly involved in the wild sandalwood industry.