

Weed work at Wannon Falls Scenic Reserve 2011

The following actions were taken to control environmental weeds on this reserve:

- 15 Oct 2011– RB, LF & Lauren (DSE) (each 2-hr) – herbicide-wiped Angle Onion and Freesia south of the oval and on the fringe of the oval. While progress has been made since 2010 (and much due to Liz Fenton’s consistent efforts here) there is still a significant weed problem. No AWO were seen in the area near Morgiana Rd.
- 17 Oct 2011 – RB (total spray 9 L, 2 hr)
 - sprayed *Sparaxis* (Ally + Pulse) at 3 places (2 on east side) on Morgiana Rd adjacent to the reserve.
 - sprayed *Cytisus* clump on corner of entrance to Thomas Clark lookout (clumps both sides of Morgiana Rd).
 - sprayed Angled Onion along the top section of the creek that runs from Morgiana Rd to the Wannon.
- SGSC has had workers poisoning the large *A. prominens* and cutting the smaller trees. They have also attacked most of the *A. longifolia* throughout the eastern block and the *E. globulus* in the former pines area.
- Liz Fenton has spent many hours treating Freesia on and near the oval.

We have not yet tackled Bridal Creeper – and that is growing very vigorously along the river frontage downstream from the Falls. Biological control is required for that pest. Hopefully it will be possible next year for SGSC to obtain the rust. The problem of “exotic” native wattles has also yet to be tackled – the worst (a tall species, *A. elata* or *A. prominens*) occur W of the oval and their spread needs to be curtailed (SGSC is currently taking action). They produce an enormous amount of litter from pods and leaflets that nothing can grow beneath them. *A. longifolia* is also problematic – it is doubtful whether it belongs here.

In May 2011 the Shire of Southern Grampians released the May 2010 Works Plan for the Scenic Reserve. This important document was prepared by Biodiversity Services a company that employs staff with botanical training. HFNC had contributed information to that team. There had been a management plan produced earlier by PV/DSE but that had never been observed by the Shire, with the result that works prompted by locals and carried out by the Shire had engaged in a program of removal of logs and general ‘tidying up’ of the area of native flora. The result was extensive removal of native flora due to scraping of the ground surface by a front-end loader. Weed incursions followed as a consequence. At the same time a local committee – the Wannon-Nigretta Community Group – was formed and its objectives included opposing elements of the management plan, especially the retention of logs that are so important to the ecology of the area. One member of HFNC was represented on that committee in 2011 but found it impossible to continue in 2012.

Off-track vehicle movement, camping and riding of horses in the flora areas continues to be a major problem. On the positive side, Shire’s work to remove much of the exotic *A. prominens* will allow the ground flora to respond. The residue of seed will mean that there will be a need to remove seedlings over many future decades.