



**A word from our Presiding Member
Wai Palya,**

This is a very interesting time for our region, as with all of the NRM regions across the State, with a change of Government, dramatic changes in climate, and the struggle of drought. The Alinytjara Wilurara Board we accepts the challenge of working towards improving and overcoming major difficulties associated with natural resources management.

Our emphasis is to pursue open lines of communication to all of the people in our region. As a Board we are always happy to discuss any matters relating to the natural resources and unique biodiversity of our region.

The Board will continue to work cooperatively in 2008 to implement our plan and assist in caring for our country through natural resources objectives and outcomes for natural resource protection.

Ngula nyakuny tjaku
Marilynanya

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Working on country

Indigenous Australians have long protected and managed land and sea country using traditional knowledge. The Australian Government has a new program calling **Working on Country** to manage Australia's environment and create employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in remote and smaller regional areas.

The AW NRM Board will manage a working on country program for the Maralinga Tjarutja and Yalata Lands.

The project objectives are to:

- Employ Anangu on an ongoing basis to restore traditional management and protection of key cultural and natural sites, localities and communities.
- To work directly with traditional owners who are able to speak for country to ensure that the traditional owner is the key decision maker of the program on the ground.

The purpose of these projects is to; clean and restore of priority rockholes; manage key sites for a range of threatened species by patch burning and feral animal control; maintain a monitoring and eradication program for protection against weed and feral animal incursions and extensive surveys and mapping of recently found new species of plants in the region.

The positions will be advertised in June 2008 and the Board will hold information sessions in Yalata and Oak Valley in early June 2008 for interested applicants.

Caring for Country – Aboriginal NRM Forum

The Caring for Country Aboriginal NRM Forum, convened by the NRM Council, will be held on 25th and 26th September 2008. The Forum will be held in Port Augusta at the Standpipe Hotel and promises to be a landmark event for NRM on the 2008 calendar.

The Aboriginal Statewide Advisory Committee (ASAC), a sub-committee of the NRM Council, will coordinate the forum. Over 150 people from across South Australia have been invited to attend.

Karina Lester, Chair of ASAC said "The Caring for Country Aboriginal NRM Forum gives Aboriginal people from across South Australia the opportunity to talk together, hear about successful Aboriginal projects that have helped care for their land and discuss a range of challenges that need addressing to assist Aboriginal communities to get more involved".

This forum will complement the Aboriginal Women's forum "Healthy Country and Sustainable Enterprises" that was hosted by the Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Board in April 2008.

For more information on the Caring for Country – Aboriginal Engagement Forum contact Myles Graham, Project officer for the Aboriginal NRM forum on (08) 8463 6860 or via email at: Graham.Myles2@saugov.sa.gov.au



Healthy Country and Sustainable Enterprises: Aboriginal Women's Conference a great success.

The Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Board hosted the Aboriginal Women's Conference at Port Augusta on the 29th and 30th of April 2008.

This conference was organised by the Board at the request of women from throughout the region who were enthusiastic about meeting women from other parts of the state to share experiences and network.

More than 70 women from throughout South Australia attended the forum to highlight their achievements, share experiences and identify strategies to progress their leadership in NRM and sustainable enterprises.

Most importantly, the conference provided a great networking opportunity where participants could learn from each other, develop new contacts and forge a sustainable future for their communities and families.



Presentations included:

- Getting into business - key issues for developing sustainable enterprises;
- Getting into NRM - NRM Council and the Aboriginal Statewide Advisory Committee;
- Women caring for country - Kuka Kanyini projects at Walalkara and Watarru;
- Art and culture - artistic enterprises reflecting culture and connection to country;
- Bushfoods - projects supporting country, culture, family and business;
- Water - the importance of cultural access to water;
- Project applications - turning your ideas into projects;
- Culturally significant species in the Murray Darling Basin NRM region.

Top: More than 70 ladies participated in the conference
Centre top: Michele Gollan from SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board.

Centre: Antjala Robin presenting on Kuka Kanyini at Walalkara

Centre bottom: ladies from Yalata Maralinga and Scotdesco with Sophie Keen from AW NRM Board

Photos: Teresa Gurney





The conference provided a means for women to speak up about their issues in a supportive and encouraging environment.

Feedback from women included the recommendation to hold annual Women's conferences in each NRM region in South Australia contribute to and encourage the development of future events.

The Healthy Country and Sustainable Enterprises Conference proceedings will be circulated to delegates in the coming weeks. Copies of the report will also be provided to the State and Australian Government agencies and all NRM Boards to ensure the conference outcomes and key messages are conveyed.

The Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Board and staff would like to thank all the ladies who travelled and took the time to attend the conference.

A big thank you goes out to all of the presenters who gave informative and engaging sessions, the interpreter Karina Lester, and last but not least our facilitator Kerryne Liddle, who did a fantastic job of providing an atmosphere that made everyone feel comfortable and eager to participate.

Top right: ladies participating in the art activity
 Top centre: Millicent Taylor painting
 Top left: Leanne Liddle with Dolly Argent from Watarru
 Bottom left: Ladies from Walalkara and Watarru with Karina Lester
 Bottom centre: Mollie Jami from Mimili presenting on Bush foods

Photos: Teresa Gurney



Australian Government



A typical mallee landscape on the Yalata Lands

Photo: Piers Brissenden

Yalata Lands Biological Survey

A biological survey of the Yalata Lands is currently in progress which aims to systematically sample vertebrate fauna and vascular plants across the range of habitats that occur in the area. A total of 32 permanently marked, relocatable sites were established with the aid of Department for Environment and Heritage ranger staff at Ceduna.

Murray Greenaway (Land Management Officer at Yalata) and members of the Yalata Land Management Team inspected sites when holes for the pitfall traps were being prepared. Plant species lists were compiled at each site, along with an estimate of their relative abundance, plus a description of the soil, landform and degree of disturbance. Birds, mammals and reptiles were recorded at 16 of these sites.

A total of 140 native and 18 exotic plant species were recorded at sites in October. Of particular interest are four species considered to be rare in South Australia. An annual daisy (*Brachyscome eriogona*) was found at two sites, Small-leaf Eremophila (*Eremophila parvifolia*) at six sites (this species has a restricted distribution between Fowler's Bay and the southern Nullarbor), Eremophila sp. *Praecox* at one site, and Spiny Templetonia

(*Templetonia battii*) also at one site.



A wombat burrow
Photo: Pier Brissenden

With very little sampling having been previously conducted in the area, and a lack of specimens held at the South Australian Museum, the Yalata Lands represent a considerable gap in terms of fauna knowledge for the State.

Bird diversity was reasonable with 97 native and one exotic species recorded. The sole exotic was the Common Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).

The most significant recordings were of Slender-billed Thornbills (*Acanthiza iredalei iredalei*) and the rarely sighted Square-tailed Kite (*Lophoictinia isura*), seen stealing Yellow-throated Miner (*Manorina flavigula*) chicks from a nest in mallee.

Also of note were the State vulnerable Australian Bustard (*Ardeotis australis*) observed at three sites and seven species considered to be rare at State level - Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*), Sooty Oystercatcher (*Haematopus fuliginosus*), Major Mitchell's Cockatoo (*Cacatua leadbeateri*), Shy Heathwren (*Calamanthus cautus*), Restless Flycatcher (*Myiagra inquieta*), Scarlet-chested Parrot (*Neophema splendida*) and Nareta Bluebonnet (*Northiella haematogaster narethae*).





Prickly Dragon
 Photo: Piers Brissenden



Above: Survey member bird watchin
 Photo: Pier Brissenden

Of the 13 native mammal species recorded, the most interesting were a single Western Pygmy-possum (*Cercartetus concinnus*), five bat species including the Greater Long-eared Bat (*Nyctophilus timoriensis*) and two species of the Fat-tailed Dunnart (*Sminthopsis crassicaudata*).

Of the exotic mammals the House Mouse (*Mus musculus*) was the most commonly encountered, being recorded at all 16 sites.

Rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) and Camels (*Camelus dromedarius*) were also widespread.

A total of 43 species of reptile were recorded, with two being of particular interest – the Dugite (*Pseudonaja affinis*) and Sand Goanna (*Varanus gouldii*). There were four recordings of the Dugite near the Head of the Bight. These, along with an opportunistic sighting near the old Colona woolshed in September last year, are the first collections of this species in the area.

Below: Barking Geko
 Photo: Piers Brissenden



There were also two observations of Sand Goannas. As with the Dugite this is probably more common in the Yalata area than records suggest, but as little formal reptile sampling has occurred in the area knowledge of their abundance is limited.

The Biological Survey team returned to the Yalata Lands for two weeks in early April to sample fauna at the remaining 16 sites, as well as conducting a Field Day with the Yalata Community on Wednesday April 9th. This

involved fauna information sessions with children from the Yalata and Penong Schools, plus the opportunity for Yalata locals to visit the survey camp, help check fauna traps, see what was caught and talk generally about fauna in the area with the survey team.

Survey team digging pitfall traps in grasslands
 Photo: Piers Brissenden





Update from our regional office in Ceduna.

Project Works on Yalata

With financial support from the Australian Government, the Yalata Community, Yalata Land Management and the AW NRM Board are working together to manage pest species and protect the fragile wilderness of Yalata's remote coastline.

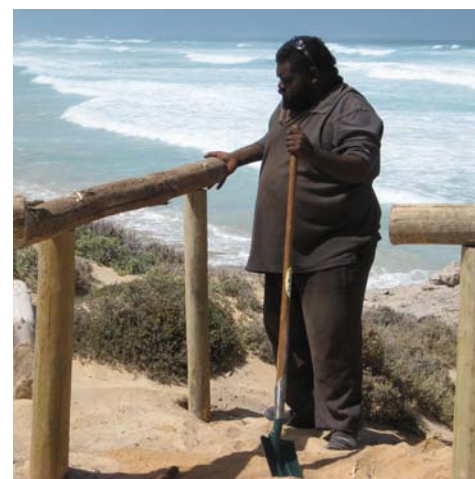
Members from the Yalata Community and Land Management team, in partnership with NRM Officers of the AW NRM Board, and the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) Coordinator embarked on two major projects aimed at protecting country for biodiversity, these included:

- A weed management program to tackle African boxthorns (*Lycium ferocissimum*) at Pintumba. The African boxthorn is a well established weed species in this pastoral area and poses significant threat to Yalata's wilderness coastline. Community members undertook chemical training in the community prior to working with a local Spray Operator and Project officer in the field. Box thorns were mapped using GPS and then controlled using granular and liquid herbicides. The work was conducted over six days, with almost 90% of the initial control work completed. The team will complete the initial control

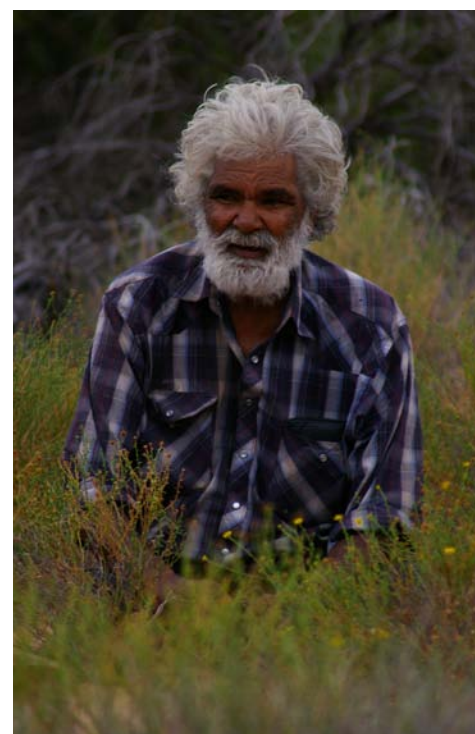
work in the coming weeks and will then continue to monitor the site regularly for re-infestations and undertake follow up control work when necessary.

- Implementing the Far West Coastal Action Plan. The Action Plan, developed by Department for Environment and Heritage on behalf of the Board, outlines threatening processes along the regions coastal strip and suggests actions to manage and rehabilitate the impacts. Fencing work around the Yalata community beach is almost complete, enclosing parking and camping areas to protect native vegetation and sensitive dune systems from uncontrolled access by recreational users. Fencing work will continue, as will monitoring and management of pest species and closure of unused tracks throughout the year on the remaining camp sites along the Coast.

With the weather cooling down, work on other projects north of the Coast can begin. The Yalata team plan to start rock hole rehabilitation work in the next month and are currently in the process of identifying appropriate sites.



Top left: Chemical training I to R; Ivan Bryant, Lindsey Thomas, Derek Bryant, Erwin Mungee, Teddy Edwards and Gilbert Minnint
Top right: Yalata Coastline fencing Jamie Sandimar
Photos; Teresa Gurney



Above: Jeffrey Queama AW NRM Board member on location with film crew near Ooldea mission, Mosaic Mapping field trip, see page 7 for more information.
Photo; Teresa Gurne





Mosaic Mapping in the Alintyara Wilurara NRM Region

The AW NRM Board has been working in partnership with Anangu communities and our investors to share the outcomes of our NRM programs. In the past few years, our local and regional staff and communities from across the region have worked proactively to support media campaigns and promotional communication about our region and NRM achievements.

One such initiative, the Australian Government Mosaic Mapping program, was developed as a national program to showcase Australia's NRM regions and to help share information about regional NRM achievements at a national and international scale.

The mosaic mapping program will document information about our region including facts and figures, project summaries, digital footage of NRM work in progress and interviews with key leaders and communities involved in NRM.

With support of the AW NRM Board, our local NRM Officers and the Regional NRM Liaison Officer coordinated a field visit for the mosaic mapping film crew during April

this year. The field trip involved visits to Yalata and surrounding areas, with footage obtained on:

- Yalata IPA (Biosurvey footage and boxthorn control project);
- Fowlers Bay (Interviewed Mima Smart and footage of women harvesting bush medicine);
- Ooldea (Interview with Mr Windlass and Mr Queama and men from Yalata and Oak valley);
- Adelaide (Interviews with Presiding Member and General Manager of the AW NRM Board); and,
- Adelaide (Interview with Tom Gara, SA Museum on history of Ooldea and Maralinga).

The trip was certainly a logistical challenge, but was an initiative that was well worth the effort. Success of the trip was attributed to support from local NRM Officers and community people who enthusiastically supported this work. Community members who participated in the filming and interviews were really positive about the opportunity to share their stories and extensive knowledge of NRM. They were also pleased to learn that the footage would be screened nationally, with viewers across the country learning about their involvement in NRM.



On location at Ooldea mission
All photos: Teresa Gurney





Tjakura Ngurini (looking for Tjakura)

Tjakura (Great Desert Skink, *Egernia kintorei*) is a nationally vulnerable skink found in the western deserts of Central Australia.

In South Australia it is only known from seven sites around the Watarru community in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands and one record from the far north of the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands.

Department for Environment and Heritage, APY Land Management and the Watarru Community recently conducted Tjakura surveys with the expert assistance of Steve McAlpin.

A significant outcome of the surveys was the training of Watarru community members in the use of the Cybertrackers recently purchased by the AW NRM Board.

As a whole the surveys proved an excellent opportunity for knowledge exchange with the scientists teaching community members about survey methods and technology and community members passing on their traditional ecological knowledge to the scientists and younger Anangu.

It is hoped that these surveys can be continued annually so that survey skills can be further developed and land managers can better assess the status of the Tjakura

Below: Tjakura
Photo: Matthew Ward



population. The survey participants also wish to acknowledge the AW NRM Board, the Indigenous Land Council and the Kuka Kanyini Watarru project for their financial support of the surveys.

Upcoming Events

Regional Plan consultation

24th July 2008

7.30pm

Tiffins on the Park

176 Greenhill Road Parkside Adelaide.

Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Board meeting

3rd and 4th July

Tiffins on the Park

176 Greenhill Road Parkside Adelaide.

Public are welcome as observers.

- All meeting dates and venues are subject to change. Please contact the Adelaide office prior to scheduled meetings for confirmation.

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