



Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (Qld) Inc.

Conservation and Wildlife Management Division

"Preserving Australia's Heritage"

SSAA (Qld) Inc Conservation and Wildlife Management Division

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HUNTING & CONSERVATION NEWS

September 2010 Edition

Queensland State Co-ordinator's Note

Hello Everyone

As you may have guessed our change of name has created some extra work for the team. Changing all the forms over as well as updating some to come in line with our current climate will take some time, so please bear with us through this phase.

Over the last few months there have been good numbers of ferals taken on all of the projects but we are still struggling to fill all the spots on our projects and for teams to be at their most productive and successful we need to see you out there on these trips. If you are a new or a fairly new member and are still not sure how to go about attending a project, or have any questions at all please do not hesitate to drop me a line. Alternatively, call me after hours and I will do my best to help sort out any queries you have.

A very big thank you to all of the longer term members who have put in heaps already.

Don't forget we still need your help too. You all have very valuable on-ground knowledge of the projects.

Over the last 14 months or so some of the committee have been helping to organise the 2010 pest animal symposium in Gladstone on the 3rd to 5th of August. I would like to thank Mike and Damien for their help in attending meetings whenever I couldn't, amongst a host of other things. More on the symposium later in the newsletter.

With the weather starting to warm up in the next few months will make hunting a little more pleasurable for those of us that don't like the cold. This is also the time of year that this year's young are starting to venture out into the wide world. It is during this time, as hunters, we play a crucial role in the conservation of our native animals. By removing as many of this year's young as possible we stand a good chance of severely limiting the breeding cycle for future seasons.

See you in the bush soon

Mark Woods
State Coordinator

Happy hunting and see you in the field soon.



Mark Woods - State Coordinator

SE Qld Report

The regular feral control weekends are continuing at Stewartdale. On a recent control weekend the conditions were quite hazy as the local rural fire brigade had been burning off in the surrounding area. The high grass is still making all hunting activities most challenging. Three new members came along with some regular attendees. We did walking based hunting during the daylight and vehicle based spotlighting during the evening.

During the daylight we ran into a group of pigs and took an adult sow. Each of the new members was successful in taking a hare each. For members thinking of coming along the Stewartdale feral control weekend it is a great way to hone your hunting skills and learn how we work as a team. To give you an idea of how we operate here is a quick overview of the recent cull:

- Arrive about 12 noon on Saturday and meet at the CWM hill campsite.
- Split into groups to walk various areas looking for pig sign.
- This continues into late afternoon with a sit and wait till after dark.
- Dinner at campsite then vehicle based spotlighting.
- Finish the night with a yarn around the campfire.
- Early next morning walk to check for fresh sign.
- Rifles used - calibres up to .223 for smaller species .243 and upwards for pigs.

Just a reminder, the next southern training weekend will be on 18 and 19 September with planned activities including shooting and checking field cameras.

Owen McIntyre - South East Co-ordinator

Central Queensland Report

On our most recent Avocet trip we had a couple of new members come along for the first time. This was, for once, a good trip for the new members and old (chock) the boy spent some well earned time out on

the ground hunting. They came onto a mob of pigs and downed a couple of the mob. This is a good result for the new members as Avocet often requires dedication and long hours to produce results.

Spotlighting that night they could only get a couple of rabbits! The following day they checked out the northern end of the property where they had been working at night. They culled a dog feeding on the rabbits that they hit the night before. This is very unusual for avocet as the dogs usually keep away from any sort of carcass.

The trail cameras have been a good tool and given us a good idea of what is getting around and when. The photos show mainly pigs and the odd dog and cat coming into the water.

I have noticed that the general macrapod (Eastern Gray) population is on the increase again after disappearing for a while.

Brad Hughes

North Queensland Report

Our recent field trips to Hughenden and Collinsville have been fruitful. Several pigs were taken along with a dog while he was stalking a mob of cattle which included many young calves. The Townsville Pig project is about to get underway, with initial dates for the next 2 months being finalized. We have also held an enjoyable social/practice afternoon to get to know other members and get to know their equipment.

Membership in the Mackay continues to grow with another 8 members completing their accreditation recently. Several of them completed the practical work before the theory.

Far North Queensland has been quiet, with several members taking advantage of the dry season to get away for holidays. They have also had range problems but are now able to catch up with their practical accreditation in readiness for attending field projects.

Mount Isa also has some new members waiting for accreditation and looking forward to taking part in field projects

I recently traveled to Gladstone to attend the Queensland Pest Animal Symposium, representing both my own business and CWM. Three other members of CWM, as well as Matt Godson, the SSAA National projects officer also attended. Speaking to other delegates, I had the impression that CWM is seen as a very professional group. Delegates were from a wide range of backgrounds including research, state departments, local government, conservation groups, and several people from interstate. The papers presented and the field trips gave a very broad insight into the amount of effort going into pest animal control including dogs, cats, pigs, problem native species such as Ibis and escaped aquarium fish. Until next time, keep those pest animals in your sights

Geoff Sloman
Nth Qld Co-ordinator and
Townsville Training Officer

Queensland Pest Animal Symposium 2010

Four members of our committee have just returned from the 2010 Queensland Pest Animal Symposium in Gladstone – Geoff Sloman, Damien Ferguson, Robert Pardon and myself.

It was good to catch up with some old faces and to meet others that were attending for the first time. With over 180 delegates and 40 speakers and organisers it made for a few very late nights.

One of the noticeable things that came out of this Symposium is that a more integrated approach to pest control has been adopted since the 2008 symposium within NRM and LGA's as well as Biosecurity, Cooperative Research Centres, DEEDI and DERM and private companies.

At the LGA and NRM level, they are putting together a lot of larger control projects (mostly dog baiting, rabbit control, and some pig control) involving 20 to 30 properties in a given area with 90 percent plus property owners being involved. The development of new dog and fox toxins that have antidotes such as FOXOFF will increase the participation of property owners and land managers. The paragraph below is just one example of different groups, both private and government, working together.

ABSTRACT

“The IA-CRC and ACTA have been sponsored by Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) to develop wild dog

and fox baits incorporating a new toxin with enhanced target specificity to broaden options for management of canid pest animals. Pen and large-scale field trials have demonstrated effective control of foxes with the incorporation of the active *Para-aminopropiophenone* (PAPP) into the FOXOFF® bait matrix and early studies are showing a high likelihood of successful development of an effective new dog bait based on the DOGGONE® bait matrix”

1 Animal Control Technologies (Aust) Pty Ltd (ACTA), PO Box 379, Somerton, Victoria 3062
2 Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IA-CRC), 48 Oxford Terrace, Unley, SA 5061
Contact: Istaples@animalcontrol.com.au

Three of our more prominent projects (Gladstone Pig, Dingo, Cat and Dog and Calliope pig Projects) were showcased or were part of a field trip. We received great publicity and praise for our contribution to these projects from their managers. The other area that we received a lot of recognition for is the UQ Deer Research Project at Cressbrook dam.

In addition to the wild dog and associated peri-urban issues **animal welfare** as an issue played quite a large part in the papers delivered.

In summary the two areas that will affect us most are animal welfare and community engagement.

In the future we will need to look at what control programs are happening in our different

catchment group areas to see which ones may have a need for our skill set in feral animal control. Then we can look to develop and grow these partnerships.

On the topic of animal welfare Kevin Stafford from Massey University, NZ delivered a paper on “Attitudes to Pest Control – conflict and cohesion”. This paper was very informative about the difference between animal welfare and animal rights activists, and how these issues effect the perceptions of the public about groups like CWM. Since 88% of Australia's population live in the coastal peri-urban and urban areas most people no longer have contact with their food sources and as a result are immune to the methods by which food ends up on their plates. They do not understand the need for feral animal control, and to see a dead animal (especially young animals) can cause distress. It is these elements that the animal rights activists play on heavily.

As a result of these considerations it is imperative that we educate, both ourselves and the public on what we do and that our actions are humane.

If anyone is interested in any of the papers from the Symposium drop me a line and I will send you out a copy.
Mark Woods

What are Peri-Urban Areas?

The above article referred to peri-urban areas. The RMIT University, Melbourne, Peri-

urban Research School web site says;

“Peri-urban areas form belts of non-urban land fringing metropolitan centres. They are often neither fully urban nor rural but form a mosaic of often incompatible and unplanned uses. They usually contain important natural resources, remnant biodiversity and significant landscapes, often remain important for agriculture and recreation, and attract diverse populations of people. These areas are under increasing worldwide threat from development and overuse.”

Gladstone Project - August Trip Diary

Saturday - Set up camp. The plain was very wet due to three inches of rain that fell the previous week. Routes that were used on the last trip were underwater. Three pigs sighted but no shot taken as they were on the move and just out of range.



The plain was very wet

Sunday - At pig point for daybreak, but due to heavy fog could not see until fog lifted. One mob of 20 pigs was seen at Pig Island, but due to the flooding on the plain we were unable to go after them. One pig taken near Chilli trap. Traps were checked and free

feed was laid out, traps were not set due to lack of pig activity.



Greg with a boar taken on the plain

Monday - Pig Point at dawn no pigs sighted, hunted fig tree trap area with one boar sighted.

Tuesday - Pig Point at dawn, approximately 20 pigs were spotted at Pig Island but moved off to Camp Island area. Explored the plain and found an accessible track to Pig Island. Camped on Pig Island that night and spotted 16 pigs on dusk. Too wet and dark to reach them. Spotted two foxes at night with spotlight but would not come to whistle.



A total of five pigs were taken

Wednesday - Viewed from Pig Island 16 pigs in the same spot as the mob spotted the night before plus lone boar close to the centre of the plain. Were able to get to the boar and shoot it, in the process finding access to north/east of the plain. Camped on Pig Island again.

Thursday - Two pigs spotted

in the morning. Hunted east of the Melaluka trap which showed a lot of activity. Sat on North/East side of plain till dusk waiting for pigs, spotted one boar. Spotlighted around trap route found two pigs in Melaleuca trap.

Friday - No pigs sighted in the morning, pig traps checked. One pig taken on the plain on dusk.

Saturday - Break camp, travel back to Gladstone, wash vehicles and debrief.

In summary a total of five pigs were taken for the week. This meant hunting was quite slow. Wet conditions contributed to this as we had restricted access to pig hot spots. We all felt that we could have been much more effective if we had the Night Vision gear with us, which we think is essential.

Greg De Koning - Gladstone-Calliope Project Officer

Field Tip

For Personal Hygiene

For Personal Hygiene - Carry a small trigger spray bottle full of water in your vehicle. To wet your hands and rinse off soap only takes a small amount of water, without the need to open larger water containers. You can even put a small amount of washing up detergent with the water to save carrying soap and the mixture will be strong enough to clean your hands but not too strong that they are soapy after you rinse

Geoff Sloman

Zoonoses

Zoonoses (the plural of "zoonosis") are animal diseases to which humans are also susceptible. Such a broad definition includes a variety of agents ranging from bacteria and viruses to different parasites. Their impacts on both animals and humans are also diverse, ranging from the skin irritation of the ringworm (actually not a worm but a fungus) to the potentially fatal rabies or Hendra viruses. So, these are the diseases that we, conservation hunters, have to watch out for while handling, being in contact with or just being around animals. We have discussed Q-fever and tick borne diseases in previous newsletters. Without trying to be comprehensive, three other zoonoses that we should be aware of are: swine brucellosis, hydatid disease and leptospirosis.

Swine Brucellosis is a bacterial disease which predominantly affects pigs. It is similar to the now mostly eradicated brucellosis of cattle. Swine brucellosis is present in wild pig populations in Queensland. In humans it can cause a severe long-term illness, undulate fever and possible infertility. Infections can occur from handling raw meat, but other ways of transmission are possible as the organism may remain infectious for over a month in faeces, urine or contaminated water.

Hydatid Disease is caused by a small tapeworm that lives in

the intestine of dogs and foxes, mostly causing them no harm. The eggs are released in great numbers in the faeces of these predators, as they could be infected with many of these tapeworms. In order to return to a predator, the cycle of the tapeworm involves another animal, one that would ingest the eggs from the ground. This is typically a herbivore, where the eggs develop as a cyst in an internal organ. The cycle is completed when the predator ingests the cyst. Many native and feral species can be infected with cysts, crystalline vesicles seen around the lungs or liver. These are not infectious to us, but they are infectious to our pet dogs. It is the ingestion of eggs from dog or fox faeces (avoid handling their tails as eggs can be deposited there) that can result in cysts in our internal organs.

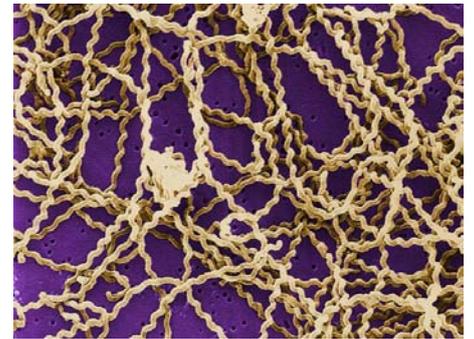


Hydatid cysts excised from a human lung. Source: Wikipedia

The cysts keep growing over time and people have died when cysts have broken during surgery, causing an extreme allergic reaction.

Leptospirosis is another bacterial disease mainly found in rats. It is also found in a variety of species, notably pigs and dairy cattle. It is mainly

spread through urine and this could happen through cuts in the skin or by ingesting contaminated food or water. It causes severe fever and kidney damage that could take one to three months to recover. Anecdotally, leptospirosis used to affect sugar cane cutters, due to their exposure to rat urine deposited in the cane.



Scanning electron micrograph of Leptospira sp. Bacteria
Source: Wikipedia

Prevention of zoonoses is all about avoiding contact with the infective agent or being vaccinated as we mentioned with Q-fever. We either need to stay away from contact or wear adequate personal protection equipment. And always wash our hands before eating. Incidentally, one of the recommendations to preventing zoonoses by Biosecurity Queensland is the control of pest animals that carry zoonotic diseases, such as wild pigs. So keep up the good work!

More info:

http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/4790_3148.htm

Dr. Louisa Poutsma and Francisco Bravo

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Our Supporters

The businesses listed below support us in different ways, whether it is through direct discounts to members, donations to the Christmas Shoot, or items loaned for field use.

When purchasing items from these businesses please be sure to mention you are a Hunting & Conservation member for discounts where applicable.

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Upcoming Activity Dates - 2010

Be sure to mark the dates below in your diary and plan to come along. You never know – you might just be free on that date. We have kept this page separate so you can put it up on the fridge too!

Hunting Activities - Attendance at activities **must** be arranged with the Team Leader (Contact) as most activities will have a safe operating limit.

September			
3 rd	Stewartdale - Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
18 th -19 th	Southern Training weekend	Southern	Brett Marais
25 th - 2 nd	Avocet: Emerald Week-long	Central	Brad Hughes
29 th – 2 nd	Hughenden	Northern	Geoff Sloman
October			
15 th – 18 th	Collinsville	Northern	Geoff Sloman
16 th	Stewartdale - Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
16 th – 23 rd	Gladstone Pig Project	Central	Greg Dekoning
23 rd -24 th	Avocet: Emerald	Central	Brad Hughes
23 rd – 30 th	Calliope Pig Project	Central	Greg Dekoning
November			
5 th	Stewartdale - Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
12 th – 15 th	Hughenden	Northern	Geoff Sloman
20 th -21 st	Southern Training weekend	Southern	Brett Marais
27 th -28 th	Avocet: Emerald	Central	Brad Hughes
December			
3 rd – 5 th	Collinsville	Northern	Geoff Sloman
4 th – 11 th	Dingo Cat & Dog Project	Central	Rod Costin
11 th – 18 th	Gladstone Pig Project	Central	Greg Dekoning
18 th	Stewartdale - Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre

Project Target Species

Avocet – Primary - Foxes, Cats, Dogs. Secondary – Rabbits, Pigs

Collinsville - Primary – Pigs, scrub cattle

Stewartdale - Primary - Hares, foxes, cats, dogs. Secondary – Pigs