



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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CONSERVATION & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT (Qld) NEWS

November 2011 Edition

Message from the Committee Chairman

A good night was had by all -
Our first social night in Brisbane was a success judging by the comments and feedback from the people that attended. The wild game snags sold out the quickest! The evening was used well by all in meeting fellow members.

Geoff Jones (SSAA Qld President) spoke about the work and negotiations going on behind the scenes to protect and develop the various shooting disciplines and conservation hunting activities in Qld. He also stressed that the future of conservation hunting requires everyone to help make the public aware of the very important role that we play in removing extremely destructive feral pests from our fragile Australian ecosystems.

The next social night, in Brisbane, will be in early 2012. Our plan is to have guest speakers covering a range of topics at future evenings. We need a few people to

volunteer to assist our committee in making these evenings a success by helping with: picking up the snags, drinks, ice and esky's, bring a BBQ, help set up the venue etc. Please call Brett Marais on 0417 708 568 if you can lend a hand or have some ideas to make these evenings even better.

Townsville & Mackay - The teams in both these regions are really starting to get going with successful projects running and others in the planning and pre planning stages. Your contacts are Randle Irvin in Townsville or Graham Blines in Mackay

Gladstone - Greg De Koning has single-handedly built a very successful team in this region. His hard work and excellent relationship building has seen us offered more properties in the region. For those of you in this region, give Greg a call as he's keen to teach some future project leaders the ropes and also to apply for grants to fund the purchase of quad bikes or off road vehicles to be used in the region. Another Gladstone

CWM accreditation course will be conducted on 30th of November, contact Greg de Koning on 0458732993

Grants - Following on from the social night, we have the start of a grant sub-committee that we'll look to develop over the next few months, ahead of the next round of major Federal Government grants. If we are successful in securing these grants, the funds will be used state wide to provide training & resources to our region/team leaders, and others that volunteer their time, which in turn delivers results in the field.

If members in the various regions also wish to apply for grants to fund quads, vehicles, trailers, equipment, etc, for CWM please let us know and we are happy to assist with some of the info that you'll need, however be aware we won't have time to write your grant applications for you.

Damien Ferguson
Committee Chairman
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Central Eastern Queensland Report

Editor's note: The Gladstone and Calliope projects are very successful CWM conservation projects which focus on protecting high value eco systems.

Gladstone Pig project – October Trip Diary

Saturday. Set up camp then check pig traps and condition of the marine plain. The marine plain was dry enough to get to most places.

A trip to Pig Island in the middle of the Marine plain was planned to see if any pigs had set up home. One pair of hunters climbed on top while the others watched out for any escape attempts. One boar was shot making a break for it, and another playing hide and seek was shot on the island. While inspecting the culled pig on the plain a small mob was seen to the north and were set after. This resulted in another 5 pigs taken. A total of 7 for the first afternoon and the team were in high spirits.



Early morning scanning for feral species

Sunday. At Pig Point for daybreak, but due to heavy fog could not see until fog lifted about ¾ of an hour later. No pigs were seen that day. Traps were cleaned out and free feed was laid out, traps were not set yet due to needing at a couple of days to attract pigs and the lack of pig activity.

Monday. Pig Point at dawn still too foggy, no pigs sighted, trap maintenance was done. The Polaris got towed away after it broke a drive belt. Set up for night vision watch and wait at the fig tree trap area with one boar sighted on dusk and a mob of 20 seen but not shot at. A lone boar was taken as it walked past the vehicle at 10 meters distance.



One of 22 pigs taken

Tuesday. Still foggy at pig point at dawn, traps checked. Nothing was seen until late afternoon when a small mob consisting of four adult pigs and about 10 piglets was sighted while waiting at the fig tree trap area. All 4 adults were taken but the small pigs escaped.

Wednesday. Two boars were taken; 1 in the morning and the other in the afternoon. No real pattern was found in the pig activity we just had to keep looking for them. While waiting at dusk at the fig tree we spotted the escapee pigs from the previous day. Six small pigs were despatched and the rest are still running.

Thursday. Early mornings and late nights are starting to take their toll and we all have a bit of a sleep in. Another lone boar was shot and a few more areas explored.

Two members of the team ventured out to the plain after sundown to do a final sweep of the area when a pig's squeal

could be heard in the distance. Using the full moon and night vision equipment, they were able to successfully walk 300 metres to the edge of the tea tree swamp where a good boar was foraging in the mud.

At a distance of about 9 metres a rifle mounted torch was turned on and another large boar was removed from this fragile environment.

It was an impressive example of the use of night vision especially as the pig could not be seen without this equipment even by full moon at such a close distance.



A boar taken on the run

Friday. No pigs sighted in the morning but a walk through the sand dunes next to the Melaleuca swamps proved productive with a large boar busting out of the Lantana 10 meters away trying to make a getaway. A quick shot from a 300win mag foiled his escape plans.

Saturday. Break camp and travel back to Gladstone, during a wild storm on the dirt tracks made for an interesting drive, wash vehicles and debrief.

Summary. Seven CWM members came on this trip. With a total of 22 pigs and one fox were taken for the week meant hunting was hot and cold. No pigs were trapped and little activity was seen around the trap areas. Good conditions contributed to the numbers as we had access to most of the pig hot

spots. Night Vision gear proved to be an asset, depending on how much time you wanted to spend with it.

Calliope pig project

The September Calliope Pig project was attended by 4 CWM members. Michael and Johan arrived on Friday and hunted from Saturday to Tuesday then left Wednesday morning. Myself and Wayne hunted Wednesday to Friday. This worked well with CWM having two people on the project for the full week.



Pig feed bait being prepared

Our project partners had placed free feed at various locations during the previous month to attract the pigs.



12 pigs were taken while walking

Johan and Michael helped get four traps operational which resulted in four pigs being trapped. Another 12 pigs were taken while walking making a total of 16 all together. Our project partners were pleased with this result and want to set up more traps during the next project.

Central Western Queensland Report

Well it's been a while between trips, but recently we attended the "Blackwater" cat and dog project.

The trip was successful in taking 1 pig on a morning hunt and 1 cat on the first afternoon hunt, nothing was seen under spotlight. Although a few pigs seen throughout the weekend adequate shots did not present. With the researchers having been on the property for some months they were able to give us some valuable feedback on feral game location. All in all a good time was had by those who attended and we'll be back before Christmas.

The weekend of the 15th saw an accreditation course done in Emerald with 4 new members join our ranks, with more to come.

With all the new conservation projects coming on line we're going to need them and many more.

Rod Costin

Avocet Report

Well, what a trip! With only four of us shooting – three for the whole week and one for the last two days – it was a very busy eight days.

Each team member took a turn for a couple of days being Team Leader (all doing a top job). In addition to spotlighting, we ran a total of seven sets of cat cage traps (3 per set on Avocet) and six single traps on Minerva Mine.

The traps on Avocet proved unsuccessful at catching any cats but were quite good at catching other animals including 25 northern bandicoots, 2 rabbits, 2 Rufous Bettongs and a Little Raven. On Minerva Mine we trapped 3 cats and 7 northern bandicoots over the five trapping nights. All Bandicoots, Bettongs and Ravens were released unharmed.



3 cats were trapped at Minerva Mine

The day time hunting resulted in three pigs (1 sow - 70kg and 2 suckers - 20kg each) being taken on Avocet over three different days. The night spotlighting saw 1 large sow and 2 rabbits taken on Avocet, and 5 cats, 7 pigs and 7 hares over 5 nights on the neighbouring property (2 of the pigs were between 60 and 70 kg, the rest between 10 and 20kg).



Large feral pig

The Flashjack wallaby is the focus of our conservation effort on this project and we assist in trapping them for research purposes. Flashjack Wallaby traps were set for pre-feeding

and on the Friday night they were set properly resulting in five Flashjacks in the traps on the first check plus two Rufous Bettongs. The morning run resulted in five Flashjacks and one Rufous Bettong.



Rod Hicks and Julian Power from Minerva Mines

On the Saturday morning we were joined by the CEO (Rod Hicks) and the Environment Officer (Julian Power) from Minerva, along with their wives, to have a look at how the Flashjack trapping was done. They were shown the key features on a Flashjack before Rod assisted in its release.



Pigs taken on neighbouring property

We know of three cats and one dog, plus several pigs that are still residing on the Avocet Reserve the next week long trip is set for April next year but if you can rustle up a team of two or more for a few days or so, extra trips can be arranged with Brad Hughes or myself.



Two large feral cats

These are two of the larger cats taken on the trip and below is one of their meal items; a northern brown bandicoot. Cats this size have no problem taking natives animals this size and larger.



Northern Brown Bandicoot

Mark Woods

North Queensland Report

Townsville Pig Project

This project area is close to Townsville so travel is the least of our problems for a change. The manager in charge has been working on gaining better access for us and we are now seeing the fruits of his labour as we will have access to the area between 5pm and 6am.

We have started this project with 4 trip leaders so as to be able to maximise our

exposure. The manager introduced the trip leaders to the first area in early October and within the hour they sighted about 100 pigs. There will be several areas set by the manager over time. We need to make available enthusiastic members to assist the manager in his quest to remove the feral pigs, dogs, and cats from this area.

At this stage project trips are arranged on short notice so we would like to maintain a "hot list" of members interested in taking part so let us know if and possibly when you are available. So if you are travelling to Townsville in the near future let us know and we will see what we can do to get you involved. There is an also option for several consecutive day's with camping available.

A big thank you to Graham Blines and his team in the Mackay area for bringing the Collinsville project back on line. Three members from Townsville travelled down and can recommend this as a very good weekend away.

Randle Irvin

Mackay Report

A total of ten members from Mackay, Townsville and as far away as Brisbane participated in the recent Collinsville Project activities over a ten day period in late Sept and early Oct.

The future of this project is subject to ongoing discussions with the indigenous owners and depends on what future use the

property is put to. It has been operating as a working cattle station but the indigenous lessees are destocking the property and terminating the lease.



The weather good but the driving was slow work

On this trip we experienced exceptionally good weather with night temperatures dropping well into single digits and maximum temperatures around 32-33 degrees. Apart from a heavy smoke haze for three or four days the weather was fine and clear with light breezes. With members coming and going over the period it was a great opportunity to involve two new Trip Leaders on the Project.



Home away from home

Hunting conditions were quite difficult with flowing water still in most creeks, gullies and the river. 4WD vehicles were needed to access many parts of the property with a lot of first and second gear work involved. A good campsite with shed and long-drop toilet made a very comfortable "home away from home" for a few days.



The river had water in it



And fish too!

There were not a lot of ferals taken on this trip but those who attended now have a very good idea of where to start next time. Tally for this trip was 2 rabbits, 1 dog, 5 pigs and 2 "high range" pigs.



3 of the 5 pigs taken

On this trip Randle Irvin trialed a SPOT Satellite GPS Messenger and sent "all's well" messages to Damien and Mark from several locations. Messages were received at the same time as the messenger recorded the send. This little piece of technology may be useful for future trips and information about it may be found at:

www.findmespot.com/en/index.php?cid=102



The SPOT gps messenger

Mackay members are running another Accreditation Course at our SSAA Range on 5th November and a couple of our members are still actively engaged in updating the Accreditation Manual with others from the south.

Graham Blines

SE Queensland Report

The Stewartdale monthly feral control program was conducted this month with an early Sunday morning walk of the property. We didn't camp out as the weather had been quite unpredictable the previous weeks with many early spring storms. We saw plenty of fresh pig diggings but the only pig that we found was a very small piglet that appeared to have died of natural causes.

Members are encouraged to attend the Stewartdale Feral control weekends as they are a great way to get out and met fellow members and there is always a chance of getting a pig or two.

The last training weekend of the year is on the weekend of 19th- 20th November and I encourage all members come along and have a catch up with fellow members and have a fun social shoot to round out the year.

Owen McIntyre – Sthn Qld Co-ordinator, Stewartdale Project and Accreditation Officer

The Wild Dog Problem

Wild dogs continue to be a problem in Queensland both in rural and increasingly in peri-urban areas. The economic loss to farmers is estimated at \$67 million annually. Apart from this the dogs prey on native species, spread disease, dilute dingo genetics and threaten human safety.

An updated strategy for comprehensive control of wild dogs has recently been released by the Qld State Government. The WILD DOG MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2011-2016 (can be downloaded from:

www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au

The list of definitions below is taken from the document and provides important clarification of the terminology.

- **Wild dogs** - all wild-living dogs (including dingoes, feral dogs and hybrids)
- **Dingoes** - native dogs of Asia. Selectively bred by human beings from wolves. Present in Australia before domestic dogs.
- **Pure dingoes** - are populations or individuals that have not hybridised with domestic dogs or hybrids
- **Domestic dogs** - a dog, other than a dingo or dingo hybrid, that is fed and kept by someone
- **Hybrids** - dogs resulting from crossbreeding of a dingo and a domestic dog, and the descendants of crossbred progeny
- **Feral dogs** - wild living domestic dogs

- **Free-roaming dogs** - dogs that are owned by humans but not under an owners direct supervision and management
- **Commensal dogs** - wild dogs (including dingoes and free-roaming domestic dogs) living in close association with, but independently of, human beings.

Legislation

All wild dogs are declared Class 2 pest animals under the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management Act). Landholders, including government agencies responsible for state lands, are obliged to take reasonable steps to control declared pest animals on their land.

The dingo is defined as "wildlife" and "native wildlife" under the Nature Conservation Act 1992, and is a natural resource within protected areas such as national parks.



Dingoes are defined as native dogs of Asia

The new strategy sets a framework for implementation and co-ordination of resources for control by stakeholders at a landscape rather than a property level. New knowledge of wild dog behaviour, habitat and movement corridors assists in a more comprehensive approach.

The main control measures remain the wild dog barrier fence (WDBF), 1080 baiting, trapping and shooting.

The Wild Dog Management Strategy (WDMS) describes the advantages of shooting as being:

- Suited to control of small populations or problem individuals
- Effective when used as part of an integrated approach
- Has no effect on non-target species

The stated disadvantage is that shooting is time consuming and labour intensive

The CWM committee believes that our organization could contribute to an integrated approach by utilizing members in areas after baiting.

Research shows that young dogs move into domains that were held previously by dogs that have been poisoned.

Shooting has been described by government agencies as an "opportunistic" method of control and has not, in the past, been considered very useful. However, we believe that making the most of the post baiting control opportunities as part of an integrated approach is sensible.

The farmer support organisation AGFORCE continues as the catalyst for change with the wild dog problem. There will be a continuation of their popular PREDATOR CONTROL DAYS, commencing again in early 2012. Details of these will be advised in future newsletters.

Bob Michael

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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 – 2011/2012

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.

November 2011			
TBA	Townsville Project	Northern	Randle Irvin
TBA	Collinsville	Northern	Graham Blines
19 th – 20 th	Southern Training Weekend	Southern	Brett Marais
19 th – 20 th	Blackwater Cat & Dog Project	Central	Rod Costin
19 th – 26 th	Calliope Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
December			
3 rd – 10 th	Gladstone Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
17 th – 18 th	Stewartdale – Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
17 th – 18 th	Avocet: Emerald	Central	Brad Hughes
January 2012			
21 st – 22 nd	Stewartdale – Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
21 st – 22 nd	Blackwater Cat & Dog Project	Central	Rod Costin
February			
10 th – 17 th	Calliope Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
18 th – 19 th	Stewartdale – Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
18 th – 19 th	Avocet: Emerald	Central	Brad Hughes
March			
10 th – 17 th	Gladstone Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
17 th – 18 th	Southern Training Weekend	Southern	Brett Marais
17 th – 18 th	Blackwater Cat & Dog Project	Central	Rod Costin
April			
13 th – 20 th	Calliope Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
21 st – 22 nd	Stewartdale – Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
21 st – 22 nd	Avocet: Emerald	Central	Brad Hughes
May			
19 th – 20 th	Stewartdale – Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
19 th – 20 th	Blackwater Cat & Dog Project	Central	Rod Costin
June			
9 th – 16 th	Gladstone Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
16 th – 17 th	Southern Training Weekend	Southern	Brett Marais
16 th – 17 th	Avocet: Emerald	Central	Brad Hughes
July			
13 th – 20 th	Calliope Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
21 st – 22 nd	Stewartdale – Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
21 st – 22 nd	Blackwater Cat & Dog Project	Central	Rod Costin
August			
11 th – 18 th	Gladstone Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
18 th – 19 th	Stewartdale – Ripley	Southern	Owen McIntyre
18 th – 19 th	Avocet: Emerald	Central	Brad Hughes
September			
1 st – 7 th	Calliope Pig Project	Central	Greg de Koning
15 th – 16 th	Southern Training Weekend	Southern	Brett Marais
15 th – 16 th	Blackwater Cat & Dog Project	Central	Rod Costin

For both the new Townsville project and the existing Collinsville project either contact the relevant

project leader or keep a close eye on the email traffic for trip dates as they will be at short notice at this stage

Project Target Species

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

Collinsville - Primary – Pigs

Stewartdale - Primary - Hares, Foxes, Cats, Dogs. Secondary – Pigs

Townsville – Primary - Pigs