



# BLACKWOOD BIOSECURITY

Land Lifestyle Livelihood

## Newsletter July 2023

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Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. If you would like to subscribe to the newsletter please join the mailing list on our website: [www.blackwoodbiosecurity.org.au/contact-us](http://www.blackwoodbiosecurity.org.au/contact-us), or pop into the office.

## Out and about in the Community

This month we have been blitzing winter weed management with one-on-one visits to landholders to assess the specific weed management needs of their property. If you would like us to visit your property, give us a call on 0455 522 750 or email us at [admin@bbisouthwest.org.au](mailto:admin@bbisouthwest.org.au). We are also available to deliver workshops with your community group. See more on this below.



We had a very welcoming sunny day for our meet and greet sausage sizzle at Mitre 10 last week. It was great to see so many community members visit us and enjoy a bite to eat, while talking about declared pests and pest management strategies.

The most common weeds people are dealing with now are Bridal creeper and Cleavers, and for vertebrate pests it's feral pigs.

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Feral pigs have been keeping the Blackwood Biosecurity operational staff busy. Working with landholders in various locations across our operational area, the team have used a combination of control strategies, resulting in the successful dispatching of over 100 feral pigs. Great job Operations Team, this has involved many cold dark evenings after hours.

We continue to receive regular inquiries about rabbits. The middle of winter is a difficult time for rabbit control. This is because with abundant feed available, rabbits are not interested in eating oat pre-feeds, rendering laced oat programs ineffective. We will be releasing the K5 virus again next summer. Watch this space for the opportunity to join the program.

## Coming events

### Meet and Greet Sausage Sizzle, Balingup Tuesday 15th August



Balingup, were coming your way, BBQ in hand. Our meet and greet sausage sizzle will be held outside the Balingup General Store from 11am to 1pm. Pop by and warm up with a toasty sausage, or vegan option, and good conversation. Tell us about your declared pest management needs and we'll let you know how we can help.

### Have us present an information session or workshop with your group

Are you part of a community group that would like to have us give a presentation or workshop on managing declared pests? This could be about winter weeds or vertebrate pests, or both. Perhaps you're in a gardening group, a small farms group, or a bush regeneration group. Maybe you have a group of neighbours that wish to undertake a coordinated approach to managing pests.

To see what declared pests we cover, visit our website: <https://www.blackwoodbiosecurity.org.au/>. Give us a call, drop in or send an email, to discuss what your group would like to cover and to arrange a date and venue.



**Save the date: Make a Bunny Igloo, Saturday 30th September, Ashbil Community Garden**

# Weeds to watch out for: Bridal creeper

Bridal creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*) is a declared pest in WA and prolific in the Blackwood Valley region. This highly invasive weed is destroying large areas of native vegetation in the Southwest, and in southern Australia. It is also a threat to primary production especially in orchards and citrus groves. This hardy weed is frost and drought tolerant and can survive in diverse climates and landscapes.



Bridal creeper is a climbing vine to 3 metres. It has tuberous roots, known as corms, which can be large in relation to the plant. The leaves are small and shiny green, and the flowers are small creamy white with 6 petals. The fruit is bright red with shiny black seeds. The creeper is spread by birds and can often be found under trees and bushes where birds sit.

What you can do. Bridal creeper can be managed with biological control, see the DPIRD website for what treatments to use <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/herbicides/bridal-creeper-control>. To treat without the use of herbicides you can use a homemade Bridal creeper rust solution. To find out more, attend one of our rust solution making workshops coming up in Spring, once the rust is visible on the plants, or contact us for more information.



## Vertebrate pests: Feral pigs

Why do we want to manage feral pigs?

- To reduce agricultural impacts which costs Australia over an estimated \$100 million per year.
- To reduce impacts on the environment and threatened species.
- To reduce biosecurity risks such as transmission of exotic pathogens and parasites, as well as the spread of weeds.
- To reduce cultural impacts such as biodiversity loss, ecosystem damage, loss of cultural heritage and compromised water quality.

In our operational area feral pigs are present and causing extensive damage. We can assist you to manage feral pigs on your property. Give us a call on 0455 522 750, email us on [admin@bbisouthwest.org.au](mailto:admin@bbisouthwest.org.au), or drop in for a chat. We'll arrange a time to visit your property when you're home and discuss the best approach for you.

At the state level the Western Australian Feral Pig Strategy 2020-2025, developed by DPIRD, outlines a strategic approach to the management of feral pigs in WA.



The Strategy recognises that effective feral pig management requires a long-term, well resourced, coordinated approach and active involvement of all key stakeholders including State Government agencies, Local Governments, Recognised Biosecurity Groups (RBGs), regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) bodies, pastoralists,

landholders, Traditional Owners, non-government organisations, mining companies, and research institutions. The Strategy can be downloaded from the DPIRD website:

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/feral-pig-strategy>

At the national level, the National Feral Pig Action Plan 2021-2031 is a coordinated approach across the country in response to the widespread and significant impacts that feral pigs cause to Australia's \$65 billion agricultural sector, natural environment, cultural heritage and social assets. The plan is outlined on this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luWs4MWU95U>, or you can view the Plan on the website: <https://feralpigs.com.au/the-plan/>

## Future feral focus:

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is asking people to burn dead pine to offset the threat of the European house borer in the south of WA. The European house borer (EHB) has been detected in the Shires of Waroona, Harvey and Dardanup in the past 6 months. Previously, the only known infestations were in the greater Perth area. DPIRD technical area coordinator Jenny Crisp advises that: "EHB is mainly found in dead pine trees, dead parts of living trees and pine logs and other debris".



EHB also affects untreated pinewood manufactured products. Look for evidence of tunnelling, larvae and exit holes in pinewood. Now is a good time to clean up any dead pine and burn it. If left uncontrolled there is the potential for structural damage to homes and the restriction of pine products for interstate trade, affecting primary producers in the pine industry.



Signs of EHB included small oval-shaped holes, which are three to five millimetres, running with the grain of the wood. The adult beetles are brownish-black, eight to 25mm long, with antennae half as long as their body and can be found resting on surfaces. The larvae are a creamy colour, with a rippled body and enlarged head, which can be found inside pinewood tunnels or galleries. The DPIRD media release can be viewed at: <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/news/media-releases/time-clear-dead-pine-prevent-borer-spread>