

MOORE to the point



Natural Resource Management Update Issue 16 Spring 2009

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Welcome to the Moore Catchment Council's (MCC) 16th *Moore to the Point* quarterly newsletter.

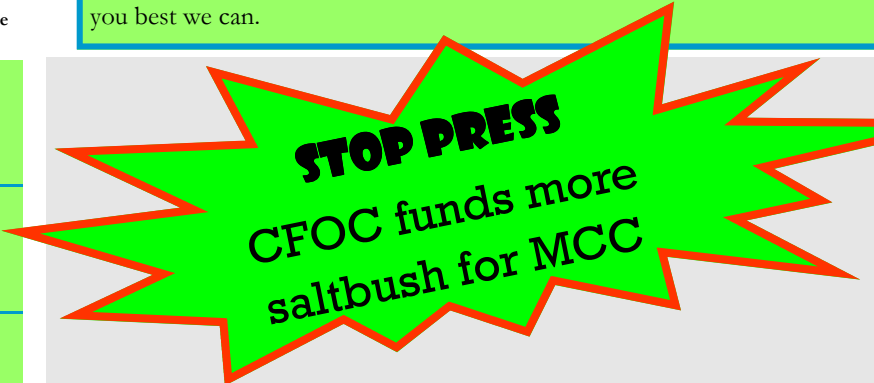
The winter months have certainly been busy and productive for the group! Not only have we been awarded another CFOC grant, we've also been busy organising a couple of workshops, managing the brushwood project through planting time and also preparing for the new NACC incentives to come online. Any questions you have about MCC, then do drop us a line or pop into the office, and we will help you best we can.

editor *Rachel Walmsley*

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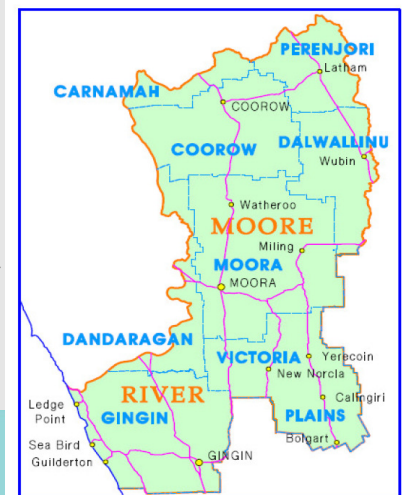
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The Moore Catchment Council and the Moora-Miling Pasture Improvement Group (MMPIG) have been celebrating the recent success of another Federal Government Caring For Our Country (CFOC) project application being granted. The project '**Productive Saltbush Pastures to Combat Wind Erosion in the Eastern Moore River Catchment**'

was awarded the full amount \$96,500 asked for and will be a continuation of the successful 2007/08 NLP project 'Creating Productive Saltbush Pastures on Saline Land' which saw 130,000 saltbush seedlings being planted in the Moore river catchment east of Moora. The new project will see an additional 144,000 subsidised saltbush seedlings being planted by members of the MMPIG in 2010, which aims to create an additional fodder crop for stock, reduce wind and water erosion of land adjacent to the Moore River, as well as increasing awareness of this beneficial farming method to ensure future agricultural sustainability in the region.

Rachel Walmsley, of the Moore Catchment Council who wrote the proposal, was on holiday in England at the time the grant information was released. She said 'One of my colleagues emailed me to tell me the good news and I was happily shocked as there had been stiff competition because 1300 applications had been submitted nationwide, but only 56 successful with only 2 being granted in the Northern Agricultural Region.' She continued by saying 'It is good for a small natural resource management group like the Moore Catchment Council to be recognised by the Federal Government for managing worthwhile local projects and carrying out credible work. The MMPIG members have been notified about the success with lots of interest already for next year's plantings, but I am also looking for new saltbush growers in the area, so if you are interested then please ring me in the office on 9653 1355.' This is the second project for MCC to be funded under CFOC with the 'Increased Adoption of Sustainable Brushwood Production' project being successful in last year's funding round.



Information correct at time of printing. While every attempt is made to present accurate information on events, dates, etc no responsibility is taken for the accuracy of any of the information.

Bloomin' marvelous Flora Identification workshop

The MCC helped organise a Flora identification workshop at the TAFE in Moora on Friday 24th July. The workshop was the idea of Kylie Payne, NACC's Biodiversity Support Officer based at DEC in Jurien Bay and it attracted over 25 interested community members including, some who had travelled down from Geraldton. Kylie and the West Midland's group new NRMO (and well known plant guru) Jenny Borger took the group through the basics of plant physiology, legislation for gathering flora and local plant taxonomy before explaining how to use various electronic and manual identification tools.



Participants had a great day identifying their plants using the huge array of resources available.



Jenny Borger helping two local people use Florabase to identify this plant

DECs Florabase is an excellent tool to help identify local species. <http://florabase.calm.wa.gov.au>

Many of the participants had brought their own flora in to be identified and after a scrumptious lunch, participants went about trying to identify all their plants. Jenny and Kylie were on hand to point them in the right direction with identification. Everybody had a great day and can't wait for the next one.



An example of some the fabulous native flora that is around at the moment - a Donkey Orchid

Equipment for rent - 4 x Pottiputki hand planters and a moulder



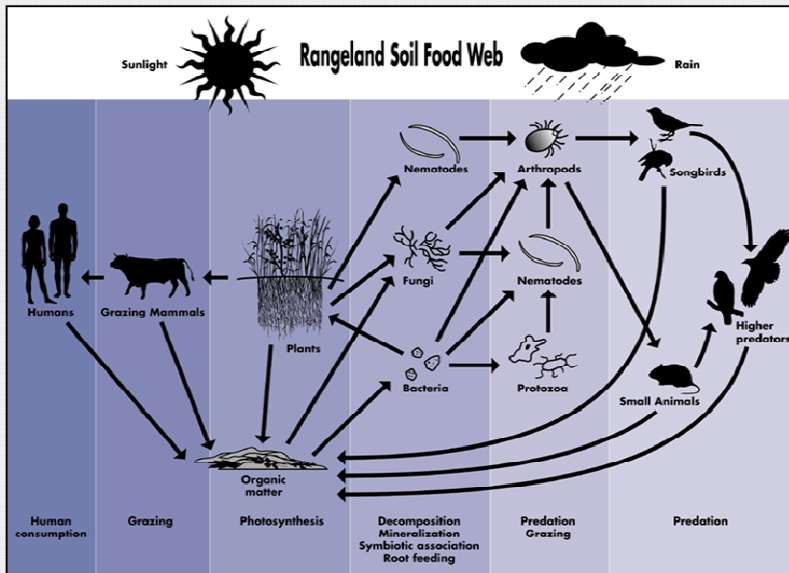
The MCC has just taken delivery of four new Pottiputki tree planters that are available for member to rent at \$10 a day each. They are light and easy to use, and may save many a sore back from the planting of a large number of trees and shrubs!

We also have a moulder for hire at \$50 a day for MCC members. If you're interested in any of these items, then please phone the office for further details.



The Soil Foodweb Workshop was conducted in Geraldton by renowned soil biologist Elaine Ingram. Elaine is very engaging and enthusiastic about the fascinating topic of soil biology – if it doesn't seem very interesting, spend some time with Elaine! Elaine's motto is "PUT THE BIOLOGY BACK", referring to the essential living component of healthy soil. There is an enormous amount to know about soil biology, so we've just included a few important points.

Healthy soil exists when a healthy foodweb is present.



A healthy foodweb occurs when:

- there is diversity of organism groups and their functions – e.g. photosynthesisers, decomposers, grazers, predators
- organism groups are functioning in adequate amounts and correct ratios – e.g. numbers and ratios of fungi to bacteria, predator to prey, etc.

Compost is not just somewhere to put kitchen scraps!

Functions of a healthy foodweb:

Diagram: from US Bureau of Land Management

- retaining nutrients within the root zone of plants (reducing leaching and gaseous losses)
- cycling of nutrients so that they become available for plant uptake
- building of soil structure, so that oxygen and water can move easily through the soil to produce deep well-structured roots
- suppressing disease by favouring beneficial organisms to protect plant surfaces (above- and below-ground) and to outcompete disease-causing organisms
- decomposing toxins

Improving Soil Biology:

- organisms can be added to the soil through compost and compost tea – this is the approach of Elaine's Soil Foodweb Institute
- Elaine prepares compost and compost tea aerobically (decomposition occurs in the presence of oxygen) to produce a chocolate brown material (black material is produced in low oxygen conditions which leads to the gaseous loss of nitrogen, a nutrient required in large amounts by plants)
- cereal and vegetable crops prefer bacterial-dominated soils, and tree crops prefer fungal-dominated soils (due to successional dynamics, but that's a topic for another day)
- soil organism dominance can be changed by changing their food
- bacterial foods are green with easy-to-use sugar and nitrogen (e.g. green grass clippings, cover crops, compost made with green materials, manures)
- fungal foods are brown plant materials, high in cellulose and lignin (e.g. woody fibrous materials, straw, sawdust with a small amount of manure, compost made with woody materials)

This is only a tiny snapshot of Elaine's message on soil health – we encourage you to attend a workshop or visit her website: <http://www.soilfoodweb.com.au/> - she may change the way you think about soil.



The path to living a sustainable eco friendly life starts at home, and on that note the first SMART Homes & Gardens 'Energy Efficiency' workshop was held in Dalwallinu on 19th May. This was organized by the Moore Catchment Council and the Yarra Yarra Catchment Regional Council and attracted over 50 local people. The Perth based Great Gardens team came and delivered a most interesting and engaging presentation on all the tips and tricks to being energy efficient without costing your wallet or the environment. The wealth of energy efficient information included easy and inexpensive ways in which to cool your house in summer and keep warm in winter, home renewable energy costs and myths, water wise garden tips and ways to fertilise without buying a myriad of expensive chemicals. Everyone went home with a head full of useful and practical information as well as a goody bag which included an energy efficient globe, wetting agent, seeds, fertilizer and money off vouchers.

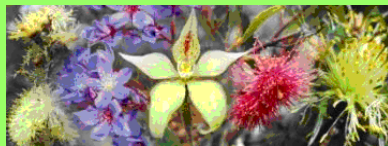
Due to the success of the workshop, another SMART Homes & Gardens workshop is being held on the 16th September in Moora, with the Great Gardens team delivering another fun and information packed day. This will include more emphasis towards creating a waterwise garden and producing top fruit and veg.

Anyone interested in attending this free workshop needs to register with Rachel at the MCC on 9653 1355, as places are limited.

Upcoming Events in 2009:

- ◆ 16th Sep - **SMART Homes & Gardens Workshop**, Moora - 9653 1355
- ◆ 16th Sep - **MMPIG Spring Field Day**, Miling - 0427 541 122
- ◆ 19th & 20th Sep - **Moora show**
- ◆ 2nd Oct - **MCC AGM & OGM**, Moora - 9653 1355
- ◆ 15th Oct - **Native Grasses workshop**, Moora - 9964 1005
- ◆ 27th-30th Oct - **NRM state conference**, Geraldton - 9964 9774

**Moore
Catchment
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*protecting the natural resources
in the Moore River Catchment*



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