

A Good Weed

The Newsletter of the Weed Society of New South Wales Inc.
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#36 October 2005



Rubus [Blackberry] from G. Harden (Ed)
Flora of New South Wales

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Spring 2005 Seminar

The future of our rivers – living with
and managing aquatic weeds,
Salvinia and Alligator Weed



THE WEED SOCIETY
OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

Date/Time: Thursday 3rd of November 2005, 9:00 am to ~3:10pm,
Registration 8:00 am to 9:00 am

Location: University of Western Sydney - Hawkesbury Campus,
Richmond, H.A.C. Theatre (Bldg G1)

For direction and parking see:

<http://www.uws.edu.au/about/locations/maps/hawkesburymap>,

Parking fees apply on campus

Cost: \$40 (Students: \$30), morning tea and lunch included

Topics and Guest Speaker:

Aquatic Weeds - Background

1. Federal and State Government coordination of aquatic weeds

Guest Speaker: Andrew Petroeschovsky (WONS - National Aquatic Weeds)

2. Major aquatic weeds of rivers and wetlands in Australia

Guest Speaker: Geoff Sainty (Sainty and Associates)

Current Management of Aquatic Weeds

3. Management of aquatic weeds

Guest Speaker: Nimal Chandrasena (Sydney Water)

4. The use of herbicides against aquatic weeds

Guest Speaker: Andrew Storrie (NSW Dept of Primary Industries)

5. Biological control of aquatic weeds

Guest Speaker: Mic Julien (CSIRO – Entomology)

Keynote Speaker - The Future of Aquatic Weeds

6. The Future of aquatic weeds in Australia

Guest Speaker: David Mitchell (Charles Sturt University)

Open Forum

Register your interest to attend to Bertie Hennecke: b.hennecke@uws.edu.au



Joint Seminar Report

Where are we and where are we going?

19th July at the CTA Club, MLC Plaza, Sydney
From Warwick Felton, President.

The Weed Society of New South Wales and the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technologies (AIAST) held a joint seminar to provide a forum for representatives from three government departments responsible for the administration of land and water management to address:

"The ever changing face of land and water management in New South Wales"

The chairman for the seminar was Neil Inall (formerly the presenter of Countrywide) and the speakers were:

Mr Peter Sutherland - NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR)

Dr Mike Culll - NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI)

Mr Jim Booth – NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC)

Each organisation has a role in developing more ecologically sustainable landscapes and to provide policies and RD&E to counter pressures from development, natural processes, consumer demands, and landholder management.

A pleasing message at the seminar was the desire for these organisations to undertake closer cooperation and collaboration into the policies for each. There appears to be better agency agreement than has existed in the past and conflict is now less likely.

DIPNR is responsible for plans and policies to reduce threats to natural resources so it is imperative that they have effective linkages with DPI and DEC, the resource based industries, and in the future investment in the latter.

Salinity and soil erosion are two widely publicised problems in Australia and require an ongoing commitment in both government policy and RD&E with respect to biodiversity, water, land, and community knowledge.

DPI has recently been formed by amalgamating agriculture, fisheries, forestry and mining. There have been reductions in staffing from each. Future funding for RD&E and the capacity to undertake these is of concern. It will be important that the agricultural industries and research corporations continue to support these. Better alliances between all organisations servicing agriculture are essential as it is almost certain that government support in New South Wales will continue to diminish.

Jim Booth (DEC) put this into perspective by providing details of the Government priorities which are:

- Health
- Education
- Transport
- Crime
- Roads

So agriculture must expect to operate with less government support.

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However, people do want to preserve/improve the environment and their main concerns are water and air pollution. Land degradation currently is not a high priority which is a concern. There is an increasing awareness on the impact of climate change and how we can better manage pollution and provide water for the rivers and wetlands.

Farmers are becoming more conservation conscious. Threatened species, new weedy incursions, agro-forestry, greenhouse gases, conservation farming and catchment management are just some of the issues that are receiving increasing interest from primary producers.

Each speaker provided a summary of the responsibilities of their department which was a good platform for questions and discussion from the audience. This continued during an excellent lunch at the CTA dining room and feedback to the organising committee was very positive.

A questionnaire was given to all who attended. The results are given in the following article.

Outcome of Survey at AIAST/Weed Seminar 19/07/05

By Jill Harris, AIAST.

1. Location

Almost unanimous: venue convenient and suitable (CBD, very central, and convenient for public transport).

2. Time and Format

Almost unanimous: Early-mid week; morning seminar followed by lunch.

3. Topic

Unanimous: interesting, relevant, valuable update.

4. Subjects of Interest for Future Seminars

- Biotechnology advances.
- Weeds and Pests: management, commercial operations, residues, various Acts, woody weeds, vegetation plans, threat of imported pests and diseases.
- More on Government policies,, legislation and action.
- Water management, irrigation vs environment, water harvesting, state and interstate water regulation.
- Land regulation.
- Carbon credits/trading.
- Precision farming.
- Soil microbes.
- Future of Agriculture, Horticulture and Food Science in Universities.
- Ways of overcoming city vs country culture
- Topics more focussed on processes ie. "how to"
- How the organisations could more formally collaborate ie. AIAST, Weeds, Animal Production, Grasslands, Agribusiness etc.
- Setting assessment and feedback mechanisms for research organisations.
- Improvements in Food, Environment, Animals, Transport, Aquaculture for the future.
- Engaging farmers in natural resource management.
- More cutting-edge and forward-looking presentations.
- Case studies demonstrating outcomes from intervention (positive and negative).
- Program evaluation.
- Talks not so broad.

Who's Who on the Committee

Continuing our regular series this month we have John Cameron and Rex Stanton.

John Cameron (1958 – & still kicking)
John Cameron is a past-President of the society and a long-serving - if only sometimes active - committee member.

Born and raised in Melbourne, this avid supporter of anything Queensland, completed his Bachelor of Agricultural Science degree, with honours, in 1981 at Melbourne University. His professional debut into the agriculture industry began with Monsanto Australia Limited as a Product Development Officer for Central Queensland, where he met his wife Robin, a fellow agronomist and mad-keen bushwalker. He pioneered early no-till trials and adoption in Central Queensland

In later years John worked as a consultant in Moree then moved to Sydney, working for Schering P/L and then Cyanamid Australia P/L as National Project Manager for broadacre and cotton crop protection products.

In 1995 he started the consulting company, Independent Consultants Australia Network Pty. Ltd., and co-ordinates the Adviser and Grower Grains Research Update Program in the northern Grains Region for the GRDC.

Of significant interest to Weed Society members is that he is currently implementing a training program for grains advisers on Integrated Weed Management. This GRDC supported project is being managed in collaboration with the CRC for Australian Weed Management and seeks to improve adviser understanding and use of IWM tactics. Courses are being run nationally in spring 2005.

John is a NSW delegate to the Council of Australian Weed Societies, an executive member of the NSW Weed Society, an associate member of Cotton Consultants Australia and was recently made a Fellow of

the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology.

He enjoys bush walking and canyoning with wife Robin, SCUBA diving, fishing and trying to find time to 'kick-back' at the beach – although he says that even when bushwalking, its hard to walk past bitou bush without pulling some out!.

Rex Stanton

Rex has always lived in rural NSW, with connections to both the riverina and the mid north coast. After completing a Bachelor of Science degree with Honours at the University of New England, Rex commenced his career in Cobar, working as a technical officer on a research project investigating the use of goats to control woody weeds.

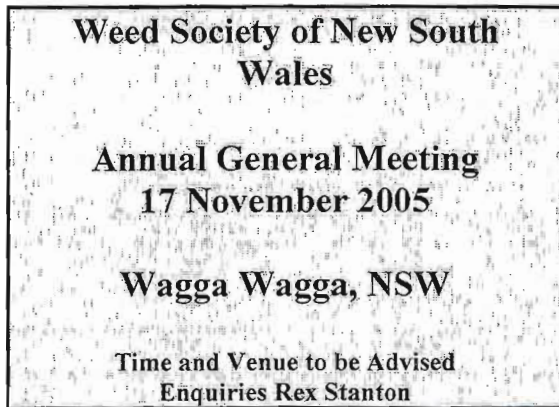


Rex Stanton

In 1997, Rex moved to Wagga Wagga to commence a technical position with Charles Sturt University working on an industry funded project investigating glyphosate resistance in annual ryegrass. The project expanded over time to also include field evaluation of genetically modified canola with respect to the impact of altered herbicide rotation and management upon long term weed control. During this time, Rex also completed his PhD investigating the role of glyphosate in future southern Australian farming systems.

Rex has just commenced a new post-doctoral position with Charles Sturt University working on a nationally funded project focused on improving productivity of perennial based grazing systems.

Rex has been a member of the Society since 2002, and has also served as the secretary for the Council of Australian Weed Societies between 2002-04. Rex lives in Wagga Wagga and will marry his fiancé Hanna next year.



New Sponsor

This month we welcome a new Sponsor for the Society. - Scotts Australia Pty. Ltd.

Scotts is well known in commercial turf, ornamental horticulture, council and home garden circles as the manufacturer and marketer of a range of plant protection and fertiliser products and application equipment. Scotts Australia is part of the international Scotts group of companies. This information is supplied by Greg Neighbour, Technical Director, based at their Baulkham Hills [Sydney] headquarters.

Herbicides currently marketed by Scotts include:-

Rout, a direct application granule formulation based on oxyfluorfen and oryzalin, for pre-emergent weed control in field and container grown ornamentals.

Sierraron G, a direct application granule formulation based on dichlobenil, for pre and

early post emergent weed control along fence lines, parks, playgrounds, paths and other similar situations.

Dicot III, a direct application fertiliser/ herbicide formulation for selective broadleaved weed control in turf. It is based on 2,4-D, dicamba and MCPA.

PreMax Hi N, a direct application fertiliser/ herbicide formulation for pre-emergent control of grass and certain other weeds in turf. It is based on pendimethalin.

TGR Hi N and **Turf Enhancer**, direct application fertiliser/ herbicide formulations for winter grass control and growth management in turf. They are based on paclobutrazol.

Other products include a wide range of fertiliser formulations for horticulture and turf, including the well known Osmocote range, Banrot and Zyban fungicides, Procide and Crown insecticides, and a wide range of home garden products including a range of Roundup herbicide products based on glyphosate.

Coming Events

- 1st Tasmanian Weed Conference, "A Decade of Change". Tasmanian Weed Society, 13-14th October, 2005. Launceston. www.tasweeds.org. Karen Stewart 03 6421 7654.
- 3 November, 2005. **NSW Weed Society Seminar – Aquatic Weeds** [Full title yet to be decided], University of Western Sydney, Richmond, NSW.
- 3 November 2005. **Australian Institute of Agricultural Science & Technology, Southern Queensland Branch – Symposium – Sustainable Landscape & Water Management in the Murray Darling Basin**. DPI Conference & Training Centre, 203 Tor Street, Toowoomba, Qld.
- 17 November, 2005. **NSW Weed Society, Annual General Meeting and Seminar**, Wagga Wagga, NSW.
- 20th **Asian Pacific Weed Science Society Conference** [APWSS]. Rex Hotel, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Full details on www.cirri.org/en/index-en.htm. November 7-11, 2005. The theme is to be "Six decades of weed science from the discovery of 2,4-D"

- **BCPC International Congress** – Crop Science and Technology. SECC, Glasgow, United Kingdom. October 31-November 2, 2005.
- **15th Australian Weeds Conference.** Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, South Australia. 24-28 September 2006. Contact Plevin & Associates Pty. Ltd. 08 8379 8222.
- 20-22 September, 2005. **Biennial Local Government Noxious Weeds Conference,** Orange, NSW.
- 13-14 October, 2005. **1st Tasmanian Weeds Conference.** Launceston.
www.tasweeds.org
- **9th International Conference on the Ecology and Management of Alien Plant Invasions.** Hyatt Regency Hotel, Perth, WA. 17-21 September 2007. Organised by the Weeds Society of WA [WSWA].
www.congresswest.com.au/emapi9/.
- **International Weed Science Society Conference.** Vancouver, Canada, 2008.
- 30 Jan to 2 Feb 2006. **5th Australian Sorghum Conference;** Radison Palm Meadows, Gold Coast Qld. Contact: Andrew Borrell andrew.borrell@dpi.qld.gov.au
- 21-23 February 2006. **6th Australian Maize Triennial Conference,** Griffith, NSW. Contact: Nick Hutchins, Tanya Cowell, 02 6968 4280, hutchag@bigpond.com
<http://www.maizeaustralia.com>

New Publications

The Nufarm Phenoxy Reference Guide

This comprehensive technical guide to achieving the best results with the Nufarm range of Phenoxy Herbicides can be obtained from Nufarm.

For your copy of this guide look on www.nufarm.com.au and follow the instructions.

Editorial - Organic Farming

A slightly light hearted comment on a serious subject from Michael Hood

The proponents of organic farming have been giving conventional agriculture a bit of a bash lately, aided and abetted by the Sydney

Morning Herald and other media outlets so perhaps it's their turn to cop some flack.

Organic farming is supposed to be on the increase and judging by the increase in the number of organic produce shops in my part of town it must be but then other silly things are also on the increase, like imported bottled water, so that doesn't make it good.

Perhaps one of the reasons for this increase is that the definition of organic farming is broadening. Once upon a time it meant farming without chemicals or at least with only certain allowable chemicals, chemicals that were supposed to be safe. Now it involves much more, free range chooks, free range pigs, old fashioned varieties, no GMO breeding, environmentally sensitive production techniques; soon it will also mean less freight intensive produce, no refrigeration and possibly production following cultural awareness principles. The trouble is, and of course part of the attraction is, that some of these things are good and logical. It doesn't make sense to ship things all over the place like apple juice from Western Australia to Sydney and from Batlow to Perth. Why not use local whenever possible. There would still be plenty of competition. And of course we all want environmentally sensitive production and sure we also feel better if chooks are free range and pigs are not tethered. What about the live fish trade and keeping live fish in tanks in restaurants - a pet hate of mine.

But things are not always what they seem. I am told that a lot [like half] of processed organic food available in Australia is imported – that is, shipped long distances using up valuable fossil fuel. In my view, supported by a lot of hard evidence, organic food is not soft on the environment but hard. Yields are lower so more land is needed for agriculture which means less for other purposes such as national parks and wildlife. Noxious weeds are harder if not impossible to control. Without herbicides more cultivation [ploughing and tilling] is required which in Australia can mean destruction of soil structure and water and wind erosion.

One great environmental success of modern agriculture has been minimum tillage or conservation tillage, impossible without the use of herbicides. Another great success of modern scientific agriculture has been the super and sub story. Huge areas of Australian soils are now more fertile than ever because of the introduction of nitrogen fixing legumes, impossible without the use of superphosphate, a no-no to organic farming. And you thought organic farming was all about not using nasty toxic sprays.

Well what about these nasty toxic sprays. Well many of them are not toxic and most are also environmentally friendly, degrading out of environment at a rapid pace. Unlike copper oxide and sulphur that are used by the organic movement and which are both toxic and non biodegradable. Also residues on foodstuffs are well monitored and controlled and nearly always negligible and well below toxic levels even for the toxic chemicals and certainly for the non toxic ones. A lot of testing takes place and safety factors of 100 times are used to ensure that residues are not at toxic levels. It's hard to get one over the AVPMA on this one. Sure the occasional farmer overdoses and that deserves to be worked on and is, but surveys show that non permitted chemicals are also found on organic produce so we need to work on organic farmers as well.

Another probable reason for the rise in the consumption of organic food is that food is so cheap, its not a big economic effort for many to pay the extra for organic food, so we might as well, just in case those scientific people, who we know you can't really trust, have got it wrong again. Just remember the cane toad, the bitou bush and thalidomide. Of course if we all went over to organic farming no food would be cheap and there would be fewer farmers – who wants to stand out in the sun all day chipping weeds and spreading farmyard manure [where are we going to get enough from anyway] and squashing bugs when we can sit in an airconditioned cab or go to the cricket. Farmers used to do that and then they could afford to employ armies of labourers; they can't now. That brings up

another possible reason why organic food is becoming more popular, the people who eat it don't have to grow it. Not so long ago nearly everyone had a connection to a farm, but this is no longer the case, and most people it seems have no idea how hard it can be to work on a farm, or even care.

Of course the systems not perfect, and it never will be because our perception of perfection changes, but its seems to me hard to ignore the army of scientists of all persuasions, technicians, administrators, managers, farmers, food processors and others who have put in the hard yards to get a relevant education and are out there dedicating their working lives to improving standards using, in the main, rational objective thought processes.

I'd better go now, before I get onto those other people, the ones who think that by diluting something to nothing you increase the effect – you know the one's I mean, they have plenty of followers, very few with any science education and those that have were not paying attention in lectures that day.

Errata – Weed Society Prize

In our article on the Weed Society Prize in the last edition of A Good Weed we forgot to mention that a prize is also given each year at the University of New England and not just at Sydney University, UWS and CSU.

Office Bearers for 2004/05

President Warwick Felton [Tamworth], **IPP** Bob Trounce [Orange], **Vice President** Stephen Johnson [Orange] **Secretary** Jim Swain [Sydney] **A/Secretary** Alan Murphy [Umina] **Treasurer** Alec McLennan [Sydney] **Public Officer** Mike Barrett [Sydney] **Publicity Officer** John Cameron [Sydney] **Newsletter Editor** Mike Hood [Sydney] **Assistant NE** Lawrie Greenup [Sydney] **CAWS Delegates** John Cameron Stephen Johnson **Committee** Peter Harper [Ingleburn], Mitch Michelmore [Goulburn], Peter Scott, Peter Dowling [Orange], Rex Stanton [Wagga], Bertie Hennecke [Richmond], Jim Dellow [Orange].

Committee meeting dates have been set as follows;
21 October – Pennant Hills
17 November – Wagga Wagga
16 December – UWS Richmond



**Grains Research &
Development Corporation**

IWM CAMPAIGN REVS UP

Top weeds researchers, extension specialists and advisers will gather in Adelaide this week to test run and fine-tune a new manual and training course on Integrated Weed Management (IWM).

The manual draws on a decade of research by Australian researchers, and has been prepared by the CRC for Australian Weed Management.

The training course –based on the manual – has been designed to help farm advisers persuade graingrowers to be more strategic and think long term about weed management and use a more diverse range of weed management tactics.

After the “pilot” training course in Adelaide, the national IWM campaign will move to the first of 15 to 20 workshops that aim to train more than 200 grain industry advisers around Australia over the next 18 months.

The campaign is a collaboration between the CRC, the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) and the Independent Consultants Australia Network (ICAN).

It grew out of concerns about the speed at which herbicide resistant weeds are developing as a result of now outdated management practices.

John Cameron, of the Independent Consultants of Australia Network (ICAN), will run the national round of training workshops for advisers who, after the successful completion of a practical, post-workshop assignment, will receive a formal accreditation in IWM.

According to New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (NSWDPI) weeds agronomist, Andrew Storrie, who leads the team collating the IWM manual, it’s been extensively demonstrated around Australia that reliance on herbicides as the primary means of weed control is not sustainable.

“IWM uses a diverse range of control methods – including cultural techniques like competitive crops – alongside herbicides for sustainable weed control,” Mr Storrie says.

“Development of IWM has been driven primarily by the need to reduce reliance on herbicide. Reducing reliance on herbicides is critical to slow the development of herbicide resistance and to maximise the effective life of herbicides, keeping them useful well into the future.

“Concerns about herbicide use are industry wide across the Australian grain belt and we expect strong demand for IWM accreditation. Already there’s been great interest from the retail agronomists – the group which has the greatest interaction with growers on day-to-day weed management issues.”

Mr Storrie said weeds researchers from NSW, Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia had contributed to the development of the Weeds CRC IWM manual.

By delivering the latest research results, it was probably the most up-to-date manual of its type in the world. It would explain how to:

- assess weed management problems,
- develop effective management strategies,
- provide a comprehensive overview and discussion of herbicide resistance, and
- detail individual weed management tactics and discuss their implementation and suitability to farm enterprise and/or weed species.

The manual also contained invaluable information on Australia's worst weeds of cropping and relayed a grower voice through numerous case studies of successful IWM.

Mr Cameron said IWM accreditation would require successful completion of a two-day workshop, subsequent development of on-farm IWM system and associated assessment tasks.

Accreditation would count as two units of a Level 5 diploma from the Murrumbidgee Agricultural College.

"We believe the best candidates for accreditation will be agronomists and other advisers who already have field experience advising growers on weed management in cropping systems," Mr Cameron said.

"Our objective is to have advisers and growers thinking more about long-term weed management strategy rather than fire fighting today's weed problem from a drum."

FURTHER INFORMATION: John Cameron 02 9482 4930/0427 209 709

FURTHER ASSISTANCE: Bernie Reppel 07 4681 3846

Facilitating Adoption of No-tillage and Conservation Farming Practices

**Conference-Workshop at the Sustainable Farming Training Centre, Tamworth
Agricultural Institute 29-30 March 2006**

Call for papers

There has been widespread adoption of no-tillage and conservation farming practices across Australia during the last 30 or so years. However, the rate of adoption has varied widely within and between regions. For example, the area of crop sown into no-tillage fallow varies from less than 10% to more than 50% between statistical areas in north-western NSW. The purpose of this conference-workshop is to learn more about the reasons for non-adoption, to identify the major drivers for further adoption, and to develop strategies to implement these drivers.

In the early days of no-tillage, conferences tended to be dominated by scientists, advisers, and leading farmers who were at the forefront creating a new technology for sustainable farming practices. Although there may still be vigorous debate, most of the agronomic and engineering problems appear to have been solved apparently leaving economic and social constraints as the main barriers to further adoption.

A series of farmer focus group meetings, sponsored by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), was conducted in north-western NSW in early 2005. These meetings have confirmed the importance of economic and social as well as technical and managerial constraints that are preventing more farmers adopting conservation farming and no-tillage practices. Reasons given by farmers for non-adoption are largely consistent with the twelve

categories defined by Vanclay, 2004 (Australian Journal of Experimental Agriculture, 44, 213-222):

- Too complex;
- Not easily divisible into manageable parts;
- Not compatible with farm and personal objectives;
- Not flexible enough;
- Not profitable;
- Capital outlay is too high;
- Too much additional learning is involved;
- Risk and uncertainty is too great;
- There is conflicting information;
- Lack of appreciation of the problem;
- Lack of physical infrastructure;
- Lack of social infrastructure.

The information obtained from the focus groups together with farmer case studies will set the scene for discussion and workshopping of potential solutions to these problems. It is expected that the recommendations and strategies arising from the conference-workshop will be of special interest to Rural R&D Corporations, Catchment Management Authorities, Government Agencies, Agribusiness and farmers.

Papers

This is a call for papers relevant to the conference-workshop theme “facilitating

adoption of no-tillage and conservation farming practices”. Papers that address the following issues in relation to adoption of no-tillage and conservation farming practices will be considered:

- Understanding social diversity and social drivers in farming communities
- Social, economic and legal interactions affecting farm management
- Effects of farm family lifecycle, family composition, succession issues
- Structural issues - size of farm, income
- Motivators for environmental management or stewardship
- Participatory involvement of farmers in the R,D&E process
- Regional or individual case studies of successful adoption
- Documentation of the natural resource benefits of conservation farming
- Role of agribusiness and other ‘key influence’ agents
- Overcoming specific agronomic or mechanical constraints

Publication of the proceedings of the conference-workshop is under negotiation as a special issue of the Australian Journal of Experimental Agriculture. The submission dates are as follows:

- 31 October 2005: title, author/s, abstract
- 28 February 2006: powerpoint presentation outline
- 29-30 March 2006: presentation at conference
- 30 April 2006: full manuscript submitted for refereeing

All correspondence should be addressed to bob.martin@dpi.nsw.gov.au. The registration fee for the Conference will be \$200 to cover the cost of catering and printing the proceedings. For expression of interest in attending the Conference, please contact the Tamworth Agricultural Institute on tamworth.office@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

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the NEWSLETTER of
The Weed Society of New South Wales
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Web Site Maintenance

The Weed Society acknowledges the generous support of Dow AgroSciences Aust Ltd, Frenchs Forest, Luhrmann Environment Management Pty Ltd www.luhrmann.com.au, Pennant Hills, Syngenta, Pendle Hill, Bayer Australia Ltd, Pymble and Nepean Blue, info@nb.au.com for their sponsorship of

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