



# Bulletin

ISSUE 2, OCTOBER 2007

Stipa is named after the genus of grasses now called *Austrostipa*—one of the most common *Stipas* is speargrass. Since its inception in 1997, Stipa has promoted the use of native grasses to achieve profit from a healthy landscape

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## National conference—must attend event REGISTRATIONS STILL OPEN!

Registrations are still being taken for the 5th National Native Grasses Conference, which will bring together natural resource managers, landholders and government agencies for three days in Mudgee, starting on the evening of 7 October at Lowe Family Wines, continuing on 8-10 October at the Australian Rural Education Centre.

Delegates can register to attend all three days, as well as having the option to attend selected sessions within the program. There are a diverse range of issues being addressed under the themes of this year's event.

The conference is being hosted by Stipa Native Grasses Association (Stipa) with assistance from Principal Focus and the Central West Catchment Management Authority (CMA).

Titled *Native Grasses for a Thirsty Landscape*, the event will focus on the inherent suitability of native grasses to provide sustainable and functional systems on urban and rural lands.

Stipa chair, Sue Rahilly said the calibre of the program and speakers makes the conference an important event in the calendar of all land managers.

"The conference comes at a time when the landscape is under stress from a drought that is not loosening its grip. The way we manage our

systems is critical if we are to find ways forward under such extremes," said Mrs Rahilly.

"One of the consistently interesting aspects of this conference is the number of landholders who are involved in the program as speakers. They'll be talking about their experiences, good and bad, and the issues they have encountered within their enterprises as they convert from annual to perennial systems. We also incorporate field days so there is a strong hands-on component."

One of the highlights of the conference is international speaker, Sheldon Atwood of Carrus Land Systems in the United States. He is a rancher, businessman, and private conservationist.

"We're privileged to have Mr Atwood attending our conference and we know he will introduce exciting concepts to the event based on his experiences through the work that Carrus Land Systems does in the US. They develop and apply market-based incentives to conservation partnerships, sustainable communities and sound land stewardship", said Mrs Rahilly.

Stipa will also hold its Annual General Meeting on the last day of conference and is now calling for anyone interested in native grasses to get involved in the organisation.

**Registrations forms available at  
www.stipa.com.au or by calling (02) 68451044.**

## Post-conference FOG field trip - Geoff Robertson

Friends of Grasslands (FOG) are organising a self-drive field trip around Mudgee and Wellington, on 11 and 12 October, immediately following the national conference.

The trip will visit grassy woodlands as well as other ecosystem communities. Grassy box woodlands (large and somewhat sparsely spaced yellow-box, white-box, and Blakely's red gum trees growing with a ground storey of native grasses and

wildflowers) once dominated large areas of the Central Tablelands. Today, only occasional remnants persist, yet they are essential to maintaining our biodiversity and should form the backbone in any attempt to restore natural landscape function. In addition they provide an essential seed store for native grasses and other plants.

The trip will include several public land sites as well as various properties which have retained these natural box

woodlands, and other types of remnant vegetation.

The field trip will start in Mudgee on the Thursday morning and stay overnight in Wellington on Thursday night for a timely start on Friday. FOG will attempt to facilitate car pooling and catering.

**For more information and/or to book, contact Geoff Robertson by 5 October at geoffrobertson@iprimus.com.au or (02) 6241 4065. or at the conference on 0403 22 1117.**



## From the Chair

- Sue Rahilly

It is with some sadness that I write my last message to you, the members. I am standing down from the Chair's position at the Annual General Meeting on 10 October. However, new challenges await and I am confident that Stipa will go from strength to strength under the guidance of a new committee.

### *Stipa AGM*

The Stipa AGM will be held on the third day of the conference and a new committee will be elected. If you are interested in guiding the course Stipa takes over the next few years, please put yourself forward. There will be minimal work, as we now have five people working for us. Your ideas and thoughts are what Stipa needs.

### *Final message*

It has been a hectic, but rewarding four years. I must thank the committee who has supported me throughout this time. In particular, I appreciate Christine McRae's organisation of three very successful conferences, and George Taylor's financial management of the Stipa funds. As CEO, Neville Gould has been a pleasure to work with, and without his tireless efforts at funding

applications, contract negotiations and administration, Stipa would not be where it is today.

These last four years have seen native grasses accepted widely for their profitability as pasture and for their ecological benefits. Drought and the possibility of climate change make their use imperative. Graziers understand the necessity of a diverse pasture and are less inclined to look for one native grass to answer all their requirements. A native grassland community comprising at least 20 species, some summer active and others cool season active, will see graziers through drought, rain at any time of year and other events thrown at them by Australia's unpredictable weather patterns.

### *Registrations still open for Stipa conference!*

Registrations are still open for our national conference which is promising to be a very exciting event. It is possible to attend some of the sessions without giving up the full three days. Ring the Stipa office on 02 6845 1044 if you would like to attend all or some of the events.

## Who is FOG?

Friends of Grasslands (FOG) is a community group dedicated to the conservation of native temperate grassy ecosystems, such as grasslands and woodlands. While FOG is based in Canberra its members come from across South East Australia, and number over 200. They include professional scientists, landowners, land managers and interested members of the public.

FOG has a diverse program of events and visits many grassland and woodland sites across South East Australia, to assist landowners and managers to obtain a better understanding of these threatened ecosystem systems and how to best manage them. It also advocates, educates and advises on matters to do with conservation of grassy ecosystems, and carries out surveys and other on-ground work.



David Tongway presenting at a recent FOG workshop on landscape function analysis

FOG contact: Geoff Robertson, (02) 6241 4065 or 0403 221 117, email: [geoffrobertson@iprimus.com.au](mailto:geoffrobertson@iprimus.com.au)

**NEXT ISSUE OF THE STIPA BULLETIN DUE OUT FEBRUARY 2008**

**CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE: 4 February 2008**

**NEXT STIPA NEWSLETTER DUE OUT DECEMBER 2007**

**CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE: 23 November 2007**

**Send to [kvgoldsmith@bigpond.com](mailto:kvgoldsmith@bigpond.com)**



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## WeaLth Project Update

- Angela Roberts & Xanthe White

The WeaLth Project is well and truly underway with in excess of 100 people attending our workshops so far.

The Stress Free Stockmanship workshop held in Molong on 28 and 29 August was a great success with 28 participants attending the two days. Participants were taken through the theory and practice of advanced animal handling, demonstrating the methods of stress free stockmanship on

both sheep and cattle. As there has been a great response and positive feedback for this workshop, Stipa will be looking to run more of these in the future.

On 17 and 18 September, 40 people participated in the Native Grass Identification workshop conducted in Wellington. During these sessions, participants learned how to identify the common native grasses that you see in your paddocks, on the roadsides and in your local environment. All participants received a folder with coloured photo's outlining the key identifying features, information on the plant, what it looks like, where it grows, why it grows there and some management tips. This same workshop will be held several more times over the next 8 months in various areas of the Central West Catchment.

An Advanced Pasture Cropping workshop was conducted in Wellington this

week (2 & 3 October). More are being planned for 2008. This course is ideal for those who wish to find out for themselves how Pasture Cropping and No Kill Cropping work. It is also structured for those landholders who are already Pasture Cropping or No Kill Cropping and are looking to improve their system.

Topics covered will include:

- Introduction to Pasture Cropping and No Kill Cropping;
- Full explanation and introduction to the techniques;
- What to do and what not to do;
- Fitting the methods into practical farm systems;
- Utilising the methods to your best advantage;
- Making the transition; and
- Future directions.

If you would like more information on any of the WeaLth Project workshops or would like to register your attendance please contact Angela Roberts, Communication and Education Project Officer on 0424 228 725, 02 6845 1044 or by email at [angela.stipa@bigpond.com](mailto:angela.stipa@bigpond.com)



Participants at the Wellington Native Grass Identification workshop, 17 & 18 September 2007



### Native Grasses for a Thirsty Landscape

5th National Native Grasses Conference

7-10 October 2007, Mudgee NSW

#### Program outline:

- 7 October Pre-conference drinks, Lowe Family Wines, Mudgee
- 8 October Day 1 (Humanties interaction with native grasslands)—presentations, AREC, Mudgee  
Private screening of the film *Spider & Rose*, Regent Theatre, Mudgee
- 9 October Day 2 (Doing business with native grasses)—presentations & bus tour, Wellington (four rural properties)  
Conference dinner, AREC, Mudgee
- 10 October Day 3 (Enhancing natural resources with native grasses)—presentations, AREC, Mudgee  
Stipa AGM (during lunch break)  
Post-conference field trip (2 days), Mudgee & Wellington

#### Partial Speakers List

- David Marsh – Farmer (Boorowa) ► David Orr & David Phelps – DPI & Fisheries (Qld) ► Richard Groom – Rural Business Consultant ► Pennie Scott – Marketing & Communications (Canberra) ► Graham Brown – Farmer (White Cliffs) ► Jenene Kidston – District Agronomist (Mudgee) ► Geoff Robertson – Friends of Grasslands ► Steve Kiss – Farmer (Spicers Creek) ► Angus Maurice – Farmer (Spicers Creek) ► Dr Warwick Badgery – DPI (Orange) ► Dr Kerry Bridle – University of Tasmania (Hobart) ► Mark Bretschneider – Nari Nari Tribal Council (Hay) ► Mark Gardner – Farm Planner (Dubbo) ► Dr Dean Revell – CSIRO Livestock Industries (Wembley WA) ► Leanne Liddle – Indigenous land manager (North West SA) ► Graeme Hand – Farmer (Branxhole, Vic) ► Norman Smith Farmer (Wellington NSW) ► Tim Berryman – Cumberland Plains Seeds ► James Dutton – Harvest Seeds and Native Plants

International speaker: Sheldon Atwood, Carrus Land Systems, USA

For a full conference program and to download a registration form go to [www.stipa.com.au](http://www.stipa.com.au) or call the Stipa office on (02) 6845 1044 or email [vivienne.stipa@bigpond.com](mailto:vivienne.stipa@bigpond.com)

**Registrations still open!**

## 2007 calendar of events

### October

- 7 5th National Native Grasses Conference Welcome, Lowe Family Wines, Mudgee, 5pm–7pm, Registrations: Stipa office 6845 1044
- 8 Day 1—Conference, AREC Mudgee, 9am start
- 9 Day 2—Conference, Gulgong/Wellington field day, 8.30am start
- 9 National conference dinner, AREC Mudgee, 7pm start
- 10 Day 3—Conference, AREC Mudgee, 8.30am start
- 10 Stipa Annual General Meeting, AREC Mudgee, 12.30pm–1.15pm
- 11–12 FOG/Stipa field trip, Mudgee & Wellington, RSVP: Geoff Robertson 0403 22 1117
- 24 Saltbush Establishment & Management Workshop, “Merryanbone North”, Warren, 9am–3pm, RSVP Angela Roberts 6845 1044 or 0424 228 725
- 30 Soil Management, Wellington (tbc)

### November

- 13 Introduction to Grazing Management Program, Wellington Research Station, 9am–4pm, RSVP: Angela Roberts 6845 1044 or 0424 228 725

## FUNDING AVAILABLE

The WealTh project is offering the following funding:

- Improved Grazing Management Projects—Farm Water Supplies;
- Improved Grazing Management Projects—Fencing & Livestock Control;
- Machinery Conversion Projects—Specifically for Perennial Pasture Establishment and Pasture Cropping.

For information on WealTh Project funding and/or a fact sheet contact Xanthe White on 0402 117 790 or [xanthe.stipa@bigpond.com](mailto:xanthe.stipa@bigpond.com)

## In brief

### WealTh Project—Saltbush Establishment & Management, 24 October:



Founder of Grazing Management Systems P/L, Andrew Sipple will facilitate this workshop on 24 October on the McLaughlin’s property “Merryanbone North”, Warren. He will show the most effective establishment techniques and grazing management skills needed for the optimal use of saltbush. Participants will learn how to structure a farming business and land management practices to ensure profitability and sustainability, while using saltbush as a grazing base. This is a free workshop for financial Stipa members, \$75 for non-member (which includes a one-year subscription to Stipa). **RSVP: Angela Roberts on 6845 1044 or 0424 228 725 or email: [angela.stipa@bigpond.com](mailto:angela.stipa@bigpond.com).**

### WealTh Project—Introduction to Grazing Management, 13 November:

This program has been designed for those interested in learning the basics of improved grazing management. For those with more experience in grazing and land management there is a second day in the series titled *Fine Tuning your Grazing Management*. This will be conducted in Autumn 2008. The introduction day at Wellington Research Station will cover paddock eco-systems, the importance of groundcovers, planned plant recovery, the role of grazing planning and monitoring and evaluating grazing. The cost of the workshop is free for financial Stipa members, \$75 for non-member (which includes a one-year subscription to Stipa). Food and refreshments will be provided at a cost of \$15 per person per day. **RSVP: Angela Roberts on 6845 1044 or 0424 228 725 or email: [angela.stipa@bigpond.com](mailto:angela.stipa@bigpond.com).**

### Publications—Land & Water

**Australia:** *Managing genetic diversity in remnant vegetation* by Linda Broadhurst (published 2007) is a free booklet available from Land & Water Australia ([www.lwa.gov.au](http://www.lwa.gov.au)). The booklet looks at how further degradation of remnant vegetation may be managed to ensure that further degradation does not occur. It makes the point that this is particularly important because remnant vegetation plays an integral role in many landscapes, providing habitat and resources for unique flora and fauna and essential services for maintaining ecosystem health. Remnant vegetation is now expected to provide the ever increasing volumes of seed required for restoration. The vegetation remaining in fragmented regions of Australia represents a significant amount of ‘environmental capital’ that needs to be protected and managed for future generations.