

Update on activities of the National Malleefowl Recovery Team, over the past year.

June 2015



As an endangered species, Malleefowl require monitoring to keep track of how the populations are faring. As is usual, the National Recovery Team has continued to manage Malleefowl monitoring across the country. This involves the annual training of volunteers in the use of electronic devices, which are then used to take a range of measurements at over 3,500 mounds across about 125 sites, over 4 states (Fig 1). All data from the 2014/15 season have since been gathered, uploaded to the National Malleefowl Monitoring Database and validated, and are available for use by various agencies in reporting on species trends.



Figure 1: Location of current Malleefowl monitoring sites, spread over 4 states.

The National Recovery Team has taken some big steps in the past year to build on the existing monitoring program. Over the years we have moved ahead with technology through various data gathering devices. Last year we trialled the new system of data gathering that uses the CyberTracker app on smartphones. The Smartphones have now proved to be very simple to use with the added advantage of being able to take photos and operate as a GPS, all in the one unit.

In WA in August 2014, we assisted the North Central Malleefowl Preservation Group to train 30 new volunteers in Malleefowl monitoring. An excellent weekend in Dalwallinu saw the volunteers progress from the classroom out to the field to practice recording data at Malleefowl mounds. I have travelled to WA three times in the past 12 months to progress various recovery initiatives.

In NSW we conducted a training weekend at Dubbo in November 2014, as part of a planned expansion of involvement from the state. For many years, NSW has been poorly represented on the National Database with just 3 sites. This year we have grown that to 10 sites with many more coming on line soon. South Australia and Victoria have both continued to undertake the annual monitoring of a substantial 2000 mounds between them. Annual training was conducted by the Victorian Malleefowl

Recovery Group at Wyperfeld NP. Several smaller training sessions were run across SA.

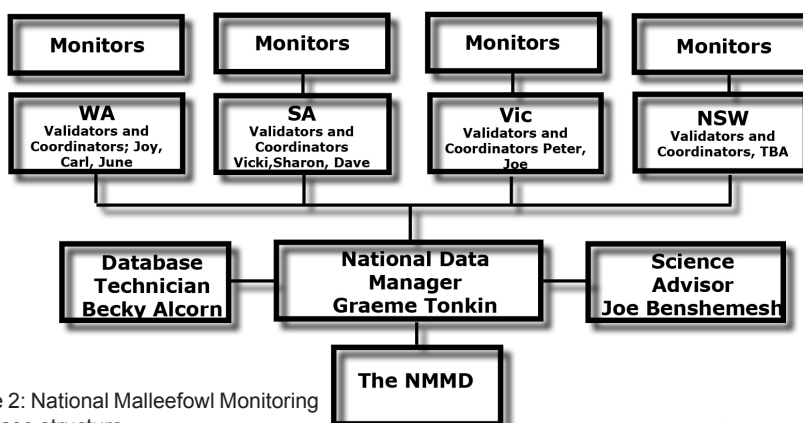


Figure 2: National Malleefowl Monitoring Database structure

In order to process all of the increased data gathered this year we have streamlined our processes and appointed Graeme Tonkin, Recovery Team member and long-time database coordinator, in the new position of National Data Manager (Fig 2).



Figure 3: Delegates attending the 5th National Malleefowl Forum in Dubbo NSW, Sept 2014

A major project in 2014 was the Fifth National Malleefowl Forum. This event is held every third year and is an opportunity for the Malleefowl community from across Australia to come together to share knowledge and learn from each other's experiences. The Forum was held at the Dubbo Zoo in September 2014. 140 attendees were treated to more than 30 presentations on the latest in Malleefowl research, technologies and conservation actions.

The National Recovery Team has also played a large part in the Adaptive Management project. This long term project is very ambitious in that it requires 20 experimental sites across Australia, each with a minimum of 10,000ha that can be used in Malleefowl conservation trials (Fig. 4). The first of these trials will focus on the effect of fox control on Malleefowl populations. Recent meetings with land managers in Perth and Mildura in April 2015 saw a broad range of parties come together for the first time and commit to the project.

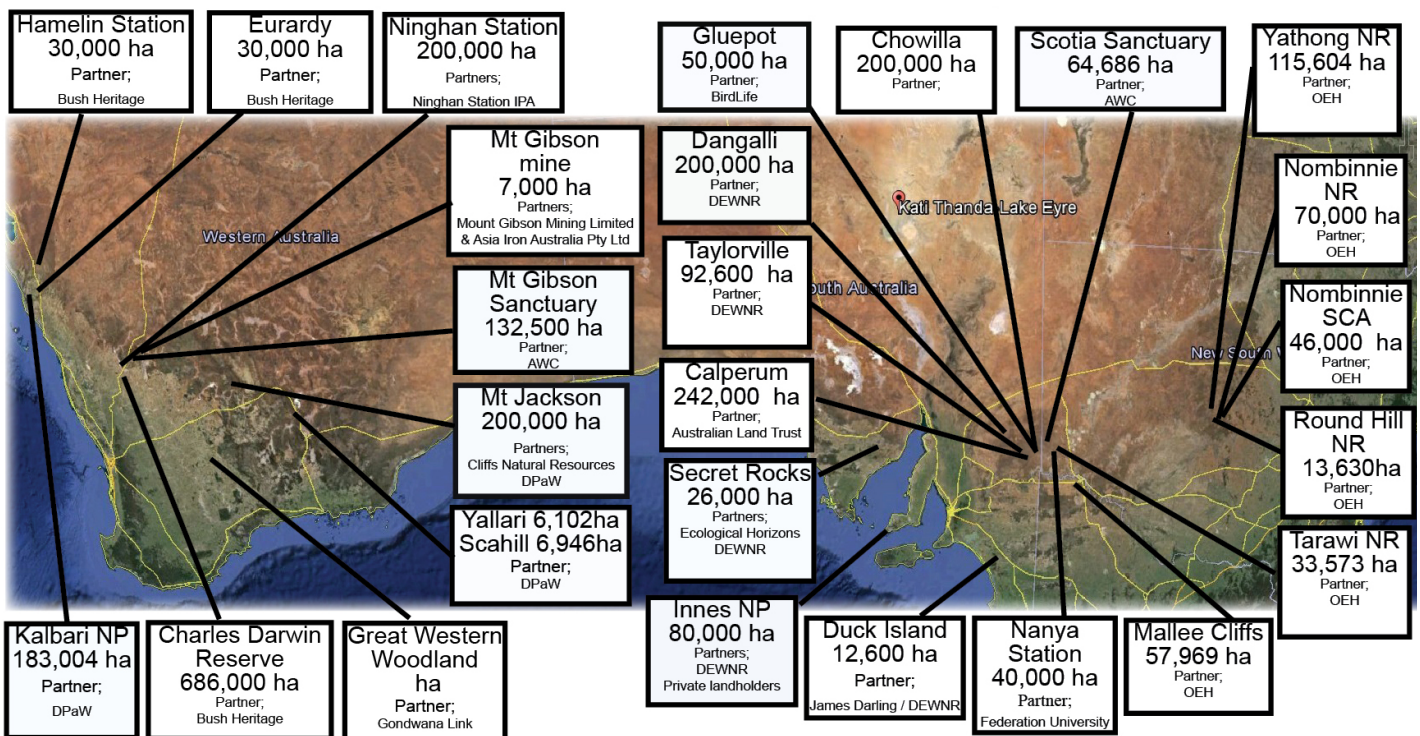


Figure 4: Malleefowl Adaptive Management Project experimental site locations (DRAFT as at 2-6-15)

The National Malleefowl Recovery Team is proud of achievements for 2014-15 but is even more enthusiastic for the coming year. We have the commencement of the Adaptive Management trials, inclusion of many new sites on the database and a large growth in volunteer involvement to look forward to this year.

To see more about what we've been up to in the past year and to keep track of us in the coming year, see the news page on the National Recovery Team website: www.nationalmalleefowl.com.au or, contact Tim Burnard, National Malleefowl Recovery Coordinator (03) 5581 2205.