

## PRESENTATIONS - Poster

### 1. Private landscape restoration for Malleefowl

#### **Bernie Fox, Member Victorian Malleefowl Recovery Group**

Authors: Bernie Fox, Sue Hayman-Fox (VMRG)

A 1552 acre Lowan Sands Mallee block less than 10 km south of Victoria's Big Desert Wilderness was completely 'chained and rolled' in 1995 with over two-thirds ploughed and prepared for pasture. In May 2003, an ambitious restoration project commenced. It was hoped the habitat could be improved such that the Malleefowl could be reintroduced at some time.

The block, 'Mali Dunes', had an uncleared road reservation and uncleared vegetation to its south, an uncleared road reservation along part of its eastern boundary and a 600 acre bushland reserve abutting its north-east corner. The unploughed area was located in the south-east. It was envisaged that a restoration of Mali Dunes would result in a very large 'island' of habitat in a farming landscape with good quality road reserves linking back to the Big Desert.

Direct-seeding and planting of local provenance together with extensive warren destruction and rabbit control complemented the natural regeneration allowed by the complete removal of stock.

In 2003, nearly a quarter of Mali Dunes' most degraded central area was direct-seeded. Some of this seeding used a bitumen mulch which saw excellent establishment of some of the finer seeded vegetation. Extensive areas in the northern area were direct-seeded and planted as part of the iconic 'Project Hindmarsh' in 2004, 2009 and 2010. These actions have been supplemented by other plantings throughout.

In December 2006, a Malleefowl, believed to have followed the system of road reserves from the north, was first seen on the property. Later a new, but abandoned, mound was found in regenerating habitat on the eastern side of the property. A pair of birds is now regularly seen feeding across the property. It is suspected they have established a mound within the adjoining bushland reserve.

Other species, including the Desert Silky-mouse, Mitchell's Hopping-mouse and many reptiles have also re-established themselves across the whole of Mali Dunes.

Habitat restoration continues on Mali Dunes ....

# Private Landscape Restoration for Malleefowl at Mali Dunes, Victoria



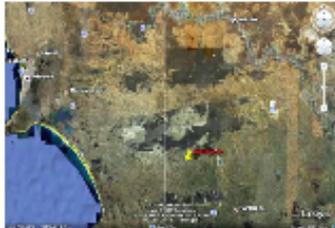
## Short Facts

1552 acres of mallee in the Yanac area in western Victoria, 10km south of the Big Desert Wilderness Park & 25 km east of the SA border.

Owned by Sue Hayman-Fox & Bernie Fox since May 2003.

Community Land Management (CLM) project site.

Fully covenanted with the Trust for Nature.



## Restoration work

Direct seeding in eroding central area by Greening Australia in May 2003 using bitumen mulch.



Extensive plantings & direct seeding across northerly pastures by Project Hindmarsh in 2004, 2009 & 2010.



Continued habitat enhancement with small private community plantings each year.



Direct seeding with polymer film by Greening Australia in July 2011.



## Opportunity, Challenges & Aspirations

Mali Dunes provided an opportunity to link a remnant Bushland Reserve of 800 acres with an uncleared private remnant of 800 acres linked to the Big Desert Wilderness by good quality road reservations.

The challenge was to restore a landscape that had been 'chained & rolled' as recent as 1995.

The aspiration was to reintroduce the Malleefowl once the habitat had been improved to 'suitable quality'.



Re-growth vegetation included large amounts of *Acacia calamifolia* and all plantings have supplemented this.

## Malleefowl appear

The bird had been reported in the area over many years but was seen occasionally. In December 2008 the first Malleefowl was sighted at Mali Dunes to everyone's excitement ....



.... And they have remained ....



.... along with Bernie and Sue.



1997 aerial photo of Mali Dunes showing Bushland Reserve top right and private remnant below.

## Fauna & Reptile Monitoring

Annual pitfall and cage trapping has been undertaken courtesy of ecologists Clive Crouch and Ann Williamson. It is showing an improving diversity and as the habitat improves.



## Visitors and Helpers

It was always planned to have visitors come and see what is happening and their help is always welcome. We have hosted Landcare Groups, Victorian National Parks Association, Field Nats groups, BOCA, Victorian Mammal Survey Group, Wettenhall Foundation members, Wimmera CMA and the Victorian Malleefowl Recovery Group.



Our thanks to our supporters including Clive Crouch, Ann Williamson, Richard Morphett, Ian Pratchett and many other volunteers.

