

Case Study

2018 – 2023

Managing vegetation on farm, targeting pollinators and farm resiliance

South West NRM has worked with broadacre canola farmers and fruit orchardists to develop tailored revegetation programs that improve pollination rates.

Identifying and attracting beneficial pollinators can increase the productivity and resilience of farm businesses, as well as enhance habitats for native species.

Demonstration sites across the region are testing innovative practices for increasing pollinator numbers, including planting unique species mixes for continuous food and shelter, interrow cropping, and hedge development using dense pollinator-friendly natives. Personalised farm management plans and regional flowering calendars have been developed for participating land managers.

A range of events have been held to share the results with the region's farming community.

Beneficial pollinators can increase the productivity and resilience of farm businesses...

Funding program

This project was delivered by South West NRM, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

Funding

National Landcare Program - \$1,500,000

Regional coverage

Stakeholders

Participating farmers, Traditional Owners, Blackwood Environment Society, Wagin-Woodanilling Landcare Zone.

Project manager

Wendy Wilkins

Program manager

Mike Christensen and Peter Clifton





Key achievements

- 98 hectares revegetated with 39,000 seedlings across six properties to increase pollinators and improve crop pollination and pest management services from a range of insects. This includes European honeybees, but also native bees, hoverflies, thrips and more.
- Five species (Adenanthos meisneri, Hakea corymbose, Thryptomene Saxicola, Xylomelum occidentale and Anigozanthos flavidus) identified as particularly valuable food sources for pollinators were included in the revegetation mix. A further 21 valuable plant species were identified.
- Rare and endangered species (including Jacksonia debilis, Melaleuca basicephala, Melaleuca pritzelli, Melaleuca viminalis, Thomasia dielsii, and Thomasia glabripetala) included in the revegetation mix for revegetation projects.
- Hakea corymbosa used as a dense pollinator-friendly wind-break.
- 84 bird and insect surveys were undertaken to increase understanding of their abundance, distribution and activity.
- Two flowering calendars developed to guide farmers in plant selection to provide year-round food resources for beneficial insects.
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge on beneficial insects and plants imparted to landholders by local Traditional Owners through a series of one-to-one workshops.
- Twenty community engagement events attended by 250 people. Participant feedback suggests
 that these events improved understanding of the importance of pollinators and beneficial
 insects for pollination and integrated pest management, and increased the value attributed to
 biodiversity.
- Farmers educated on the risk of a Varroa mite incursion and potential mitigation strategies by attracting more diverse pollinators.
- 22.4 km of fencing protecting 163.1 ha of vegetation.





Potential future activities

Further funding will allow South West NRM to build on this program to:

- Expand research to identify which native species pollinate other crops such as apples in WA.
- Improve understanding of the impacts of chemicals on beneficial insects.
- Apply a natural capital accounting approach to defining benefits of revegetation to farmers.
- Develop and demonstrate management strategies for specific beneficial insects such as the drone fly.