

Capacity to Deliver

LP015-003

Dung Beetle Nurseries

Mid Lachlan Landcare



Local Farmers Breeding winter active Bubas bison dung beetles

The issue

Input from our community indicated that the Mid Lachlan region has lack of winter active dung beetle species. Dung beetles can create huge benefits in our Landscapes and year round dung burial is a goal we hope to achieve.

During autumn/winter 2020 we put out the call for farmers in our region to look for signs of activity of the Bubas bison dung beetle species. We had positive identification on 4 farms within the region. This was proof that this introduced species could survive in our climate on the Central Tablelands.

How could we work to increase the species numbers, coverage and range?

The solution

With the help of dung beetle expert Bernard Doube we devised a plan to breed the beetle on 6 farms across the region. This would help us understand more about the breeding success and then the beetles would be released onto these farms.

The Cowra Mens shed offered up their expertise to build the special nurseries that would house the beetles. Interest in this project was so great that we increased the number of farms involved from 6 to 12. It also allowed us the opportunity to introduce a second winter active species not yet in this region to see how it would survive. This second species is *Geotrupes spiniger*.

The 12 farms are participating by feeding the beetles throughout their feeding period and then will be performing counts to record the success of breeding and survival on the farm.

The impact

This has been a hugely successful project so far. The beetles have all been introduced into their nurseries and are currently being fed cattle dung from the farms.

We will continue feeding until the adult beetles die and then will begin feeding and also counting once the larvae emerge next autumn/winter.

These species of beetle have the ability to dig their brood tunnels 50-60cm into the ground which improves water infiltration, burys dung deep in the subsoil, and can lead to significant improvements to pasture.

We hope this is just the start of our communities commitment to increase dung beetle activity throughout the year in the Cowra/Canowindra Region.

Key facts

- 12 farms breeding dung beetles
- Species introduced Bubas bison and *Geotrupes spiniger*
- Cowra Men's Shed build 24 dung beetle nurseries
- Dung beetles have the potential to provide many benefits within our landscapes

Project Partners



Local Land Services



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