

Cactus Warrior News

Tarrangower Cactus Control Group

Spring 2026



Welcome to the first newsletter of the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group!

This newsletter aims to keep you up to date with the group's activities. Cactus Warrior News will be produced quarterly, and outline progress within our four focus areas: Community Engagement, Community Awareness, Collaborations and Projects.



Helen, Bill, Tony and Maree at the Parliamentary Friends of Landcare event.

Community Engagement

1. Providing equipment loans and advice. We continue to supply and service injectors for individual volunteers and offer equipment and assistance to any new property owners in our district.

Current ways you can volunteer:

- Help a neighbour to treat infestations.
- Be a lone warrior in public parklands.
- Help organise small working bees if you find a small infestation.
- Help us create some brief, simple videos.

Community Awareness

- 1. Tshirts** – these have been reprinted and are available for \$20. Get in touch if you'd like one.
- 2. Trailer revamp and service** – it's looking fantastic, thanks to a service, a polish (thanks to Jon!), and our new updated logo attached.
- 3. Website refresh** – We're working with Green Graphics to update the website – both its appearance and content. We look forward to sharing this with you in a few months.
- 4. Victorian Parliamentary Friends of Landcare Environmental Volunteer Showcase.** Helen, Bill and Tony attended this event at the Queen's Hall in Melbourne in June. It's always worth attending these events to promote our Wheel Cactus problem and make connections.
- 5. Info stall** – we attended the Maldon market in May and will be at the Ag Show in October!



Happy trailer serviced and fitted out with our new logo

Thank You

We recognise the many lone warriors out there, quietly and diligently spending their time killing Wheel Cactus. Without this effort, there would be many more of these horrible plants out there.

Working Bee

We'll be holding a working bee in the Maldon Historic Reserve on:

Sunday 27th September at 10am.

BYO chair, drink and injector (if you have one).

Morning tea will be provided.

Please register by emailing info@cactuswarriors.org to receive relevant further details of location.

Collaborations

1. Monash Biological Society information and demonstration day. On Sunday 12th July we held this annual event, starting with morning tea and a presentation by Helen and Pam at the Baringhup Hall, covering the history of the Wheel Cactus problem, the species' biology, control options and the role and achievements of the TCCG. We then popped out to a property on Back Cairn Curran Road for some injecting and manual digging experience, followed by a delicious lunch back at the hall. Thanks to the students and TCCG members for making it a very successful and enjoyable day. This includes Jill and Cheryl helping out at the Hall, Tony, Niels, Bill and Jon for helping out with equipment and trailer and Ian, Liz and Sharon for mentoring the students.

2. Submission to MASC for Biodiversity officer and increased environment funding. We attended the MASC meeting in March and submitted a proposal for distribution of the TCCG Info brochure, Landholder Engagement and a full-time Biodiversity Officer. We've been advised that "...it was decided not to include this in the budget for the 2026/27 year. Regarding the request for additional officer time, this is acknowledged and will be considered as part of the development of the Biodiversity Strategy. Council officers will continue to work with the TCCG on the development of educational materials for Council's website."

3. Assist Agriculture Victoria with new extension/compliance program. We're encouraged that, following many years of lobbying by our committee members, and the numerous letters from concerned citizens sent to the Minister for Agriculture in late 2025, Agriculture Victoria has approved a Wheel Cactus Extension and Compliance Program to be carried out over the next 3–5 years. An Ag Vic media release in March 2026 states: "*Agriculture Victoria will be visiting properties with high infestations of Wheel Cactus Opuntia robusta in the Maldon and Baringhup area in a targeted effort to support landholders to reduce the population of the noxious weed. AgVic Officers will step in to advise landholders on the long-term management and compliance requirements for Wheel Cactus.*" We've asked for regular progress updates on this important initiative. The Bird Flu emergency may cause delays in implementing this work, but we'll keep you informed.

4. Maintain a partnership with Parks Victoria – we're helping control infestations in the Maldon Historic Reserve (see pop up box for details of upcoming Working Bee).

Projects

1. Funding bid with Partnerships Against Pests – Wheel Cactus control using drones – awareness and capacity building. We submitted a grant bid to investigate using drones as a control technique. We hoped to hear in August, but announcement of the successful bids has been delayed until October, due to staff deployed to the Bird Flu outbreak.



TCCG hosted Monash Uni student demo day in July

Help Needed: Does anyone have expertise in making and editing short videos on your phone? We're keen to create short videos (approx. 1.5 min each) to share on social media and our website.

Topics: How to maintain an injector; How to use the injector on Wheel Cactus.

Get in touch: visit our website <https://cactuswarriors.org/> or email us at info@cactuswarriors.org