

Functional Biodiversity for growers



Ensuring that adjacent re-vegetation provides mutual benefits to growers through 'functional biodiversity'.

Werribee River Estuary Pest Inspection

Vegetable growers have expressed concern that native revegetation efforts could increase pest bug problems for their crops.

An arthropod (insect) inspection along the Werribee River Estuary, to look at existing native vegetation and weeds is one way to help alleviate these concerns.

Re-vegetation projects adjacent to vegetable farms (along waterways), can actually provide ecosystem services to the crops if suitable species are selected to achieve dual outcomes for waterway riparian zones as well as the farm.

Observations showed that the native saltbushes (*Rhagodia* and *Atriplex*) were observed with an enormous abundance of *Micraspis frenata* (striped ladybird), a beneficial insect that feeds on aphids, mites and other pest insects; and that harlequin bugs (a pest in vegetable and fruit crops) were only observed on introduced wild mustard (brassica family) and mallow (hibiscus family).

Saltbush has also naturally self-sown in a native vegetation insectary (NVI) and these have also been observed abundant with ladybirds.





Striped ladybirds (in abundance) on native saltbush along Werribee Estuary (K road)



Harlequin bugs on mallow (non-native plant)

Keep up to date with what's happening

For more information about this project or our other activities please contact Karen Thomas on karen.thomas@melbournewater.com.au or visit

<https://www.melbournewater.com.au/farm-biodiversity>



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