

# "Do it with Dung"

FROM THE MOUNTAINS  
TO THE MURRAY

<http://northeast.landcarevic.net.au/dungbeetle>

## NEWSLETTER

Issue 10: April 2010

Project Officer: Belinda Pearce

Phone: 02 6027 5294

email: [abanas@bigpond.com](mailto:abanas@bigpond.com)

March has seen a remarkable range of species trapped across the region (8 introduced & 2 native species), with summer, autumn and winter beetles all present, though none in big numbers.

### Around the traps (Highest March results): –

#### *Bubas bison*

|         |         |      |             |
|---------|---------|------|-------------|
| Site 17 | 2 bison | 25/3 | Springhurst |
| Site 65 | 1 bison | 19/3 | Oxley       |

#### *Euoniticellus fulvus*

|          |            |      |                  |
|----------|------------|------|------------------|
| Site 44  | 300 fulvus | 2/3  | Mitta Mitta      |
| Site 104 | 45 fulvus  | 19/3 | Tallangatta Sth. |
| Site 84  | 37 fulvus  | 13/3 | Kergunyah        |
| Site 25  | 37 fulvus  | 8/3  | Bruarong         |
| Site 71a | 34 fulvus  | 10/3 | Edi Upper        |

#### *Euoniticellus pallipes*

|         |             |      |             |
|---------|-------------|------|-------------|
| Site 17 | 14 pallipes | 25/3 | Springhurst |
| Site 14 | 12 pallipes | 10/3 | Byawatha    |
| Site 8  | 1 pallipes  | 16/3 | Corowa      |

#### *Geotrupes spiniger*

|         |            |      |             |
|---------|------------|------|-------------|
| Site 54 | 1 spiniger | 15/3 | Tawonga Sth |
|---------|------------|------|-------------|

#### *Onitis alexis*

|          |           |      |                 |
|----------|-----------|------|-----------------|
| Site 102 | 10 alexis | 9/3  | Tallangatta Sth |
| Site 17  | 6 alexis  | 10/3 | Springhurst     |
| Site 93  | 2 alexis  | 12/3 | Bowmans Forest  |

#### *Onitis aygulus*

|         |           |      |             |
|---------|-----------|------|-------------|
| Site 8  | 2 aygulus | 26/3 | Corowa      |
| Site 14 | 2 aygulus | 17/3 | Byawatha    |
| Site 17 | 2 aygulus | 25/3 | Springhurst |

#### *Onthophagus australis* (native beetle)

|          |              |      |                 |
|----------|--------------|------|-----------------|
| Site 37  | 22 australis | 17/3 | Lucyvale        |
| Site 102 | 5 australis  | 15/3 | Tallangatta Sth |

#### *Onthophagus binodis*

|         |            |      |            |
|---------|------------|------|------------|
| Site 38 | 22 binodis | 1/3  | Berringama |
| Site 37 | 15 binodis | 17/3 | Lucyvale   |
| Site 14 | 12 binodis | 10/3 | Byawatha   |

#### *Onthophagus dandula* (native beetle)

|         |           |      |             |
|---------|-----------|------|-------------|
| Site 17 | 1 dandula | 10/3 | Springhurst |
|---------|-----------|------|-------------|

#### *Onthophagus taurus*

|          |            |      |                    |
|----------|------------|------|--------------------|
| Site 44  | 250 taurus | 2/3  | Mitta Mitta        |
| Site 45  | 78 taurus  | 19/3 | Tallangatta Valley |
| Site 104 | 35 taurus  | 19/3 | Tallangatta Sth.   |
| Site 71a | 34 taurus  | 10/3 | Edi Upper          |
| Site 65  | 23 taurus  | 19/3 | Oxley              |
| Site 102 | 18 taurus  | 31/3 | Tallangatta Sth    |
| Site 17  | 14 taurus  | 25/3 | Springhurst        |
| Site 98  | 12 taurus  | 16/3 | Dederang           |
| Site 93  | 11 taurus  | 12/3 | Bowmans Forest     |

### *Bubas bison* on the move

*Bubas bison* has been trapped at a number of sites in March and April. This seems to be an early start to the season for this species. When this is compared to 2009 results, there is a consistent trend showing an earlier 2010 emergence. This may be linked to the earlier Autumn break.

#### Earliest *Bubas Bison* trappings

| Site         | 2009                   | 2010                   |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Oxley        | 19 <sup>th</sup> April | 19 <sup>th</sup> March |
| Springhurst  | 12 <sup>th</sup> April | 25 <sup>th</sup> March |
| Kergunyah    | 27 <sup>th</sup> April | 26 <sup>th</sup> March |
| Meadow Creek | 18 <sup>th</sup> April | 1 <sup>st</sup> April  |
| Byawatha     | 20 <sup>th</sup> April | 5 <sup>th</sup> April  |

### Spot the difference:

The native beetle *Onthophagus pentacanthus* (Five-horned dung beetle) is similar in shape, colour and size to *Bubas bison*. The key to telling them apart is the number of horns on their head.



*O. pentacanthus* has one upright horn on the head, and:  
four horizontal protrusions, or horns on the midsection.

*B. bison* (males) have two horns on the head,

and:

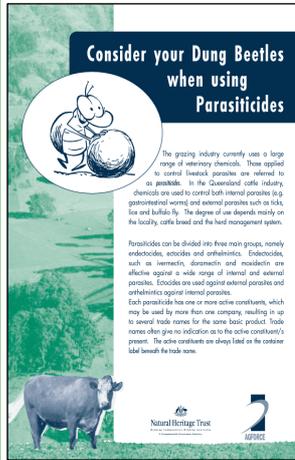
One horizontal horn on the mid-section.



Female *Bubas bison* do not have any horns (more images of *B. bison* (male and female beetles) and *O. pentacanthus* can be found in the Dung Beetle Dictionary (pages 7 and 53).

## 2009 *Bubas bison* release sites

If you had a colony of *B. bison* released on your property last year, it is important to ensure you have cattle at, or near your release site. This will ensure that newly emerged beetles will have access to a food source. It is not clear how far *B. bison* can fly, however it is thought that they could fly several kilometres in search of food.



It is also important to source dung beetle friendly products if you undertaking internal parasite control. Check the labels for the active ingredients, and refer to the brochure "Consider your Dung Beetles when using Parasiticides" for a list of published research findings in this area. The brochure is available on the project website.

<http://northeast.landcarevic.net.au/dungbeetle/parasiticides>

## Mystery beetle species



This species was found in pastures in Tallangatta Valley (Feb.2010), Lucyvale (29/1/10) and Benambra (11/2/10). It is a large beetle, ~30 mm in length and quite hairy underneath. The best identification we have to date is "native pasture scarab beetle". We do know though, that it isn't an introduced dung beetle.

## World's strongest insect announced

.... and the winner is,,, a dung beetle very familiar to most landholders in our area, *Onthophagus taurus*.



Researchers found that the major male could pull 1,141 times its own body weight, which is the equivalent of a person weighing 70 kg being able to lift 80 tonnes, the weight of six double-decker buses!

## Expressions of interest sought: *Bubas Bison* harvesting demonstrations

We are seeking expressions of interest from landholders that may like to either host, or attend a *Bubas bison* harvesting demonstration. These would be held in late May (weather dependent), and involve setting a large number of traps in the afternoon (4pm-5pm), and then inspecting and clearing the traps the next morning (8am -9am).

To be a demonstration site host, you would need to have a reasonable population of *Bubas bison*, and access to sufficient fresh dung to bait 40 to 50 traps. Access to water for washing traps and beetles would be an advantage.

If you wish to participate in a harvesting demonstration, you will need to be available to assist set traps in the afternoon, and to check, clear and clean them the next morning. It should also be remembered that there is no guarantee that we will catch anything!

If you would like to:

- host a harvesting demonstration site or
- attend a harvesting demonstration

Please let Belinda know by **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April**

Phone: 02 6027 5294

e-mail: [abanas@bigpond.com](mailto:abanas@bigpond.com)

## Final monitoring weeks:

As the project is drawing to a close, monitoring will finish at the end of May, and all results will be finalised. The remaining monitoring weeks will commence on:

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May**

**Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

These dates are a guide only, and I am always pleased to receive trap results and observations, regardless of the date.

## Next Steering Committee Meeting:

Our final meeting will be on: **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June**

10.00am – 11.30am (followed by lunch)

North East CMA Office, Footmark Court, Wodonga

Please RSVP to Belinda by Wed. 16<sup>th</sup> June



The "Do it with Dung – from the Mountains to the Murray" Project is funded by "Caring for our Country", managed by Kiewa Catchment Landcare Groups and supported by Ovens Landcare Network, regional Landcare Groups, DPI and NECMA. The project receives direction from a voluntary steering committee.



CARING  
FOR  
OUR  
COUNTRY

