

The Knagges Caring for 'Bimbil'



Makayla Bradshaw, Jessica Eldridge,
Fred Herrmann and Claire Strachan

Whitton-Murrumbidgee Public School



Creative Catchment Kids

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to agriculture and natural resource management issues.

www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants.

www.wirraminna.org

Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by Peekdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

www.envirostories.com.au

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Local Land Heroes - Pests in Irrigation

In 2015, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about their 'Local Land Heroes' who are involved in pest management in and around the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. These heroes are local individuals, couples, a business or industries that have made a difference in their local community by contributing to the management of pest animals and plants. The program was generously funded by Riverina Local Land Services.

Local Land Heroes is part of Enviro-Stories, a PeekDesigns education program.

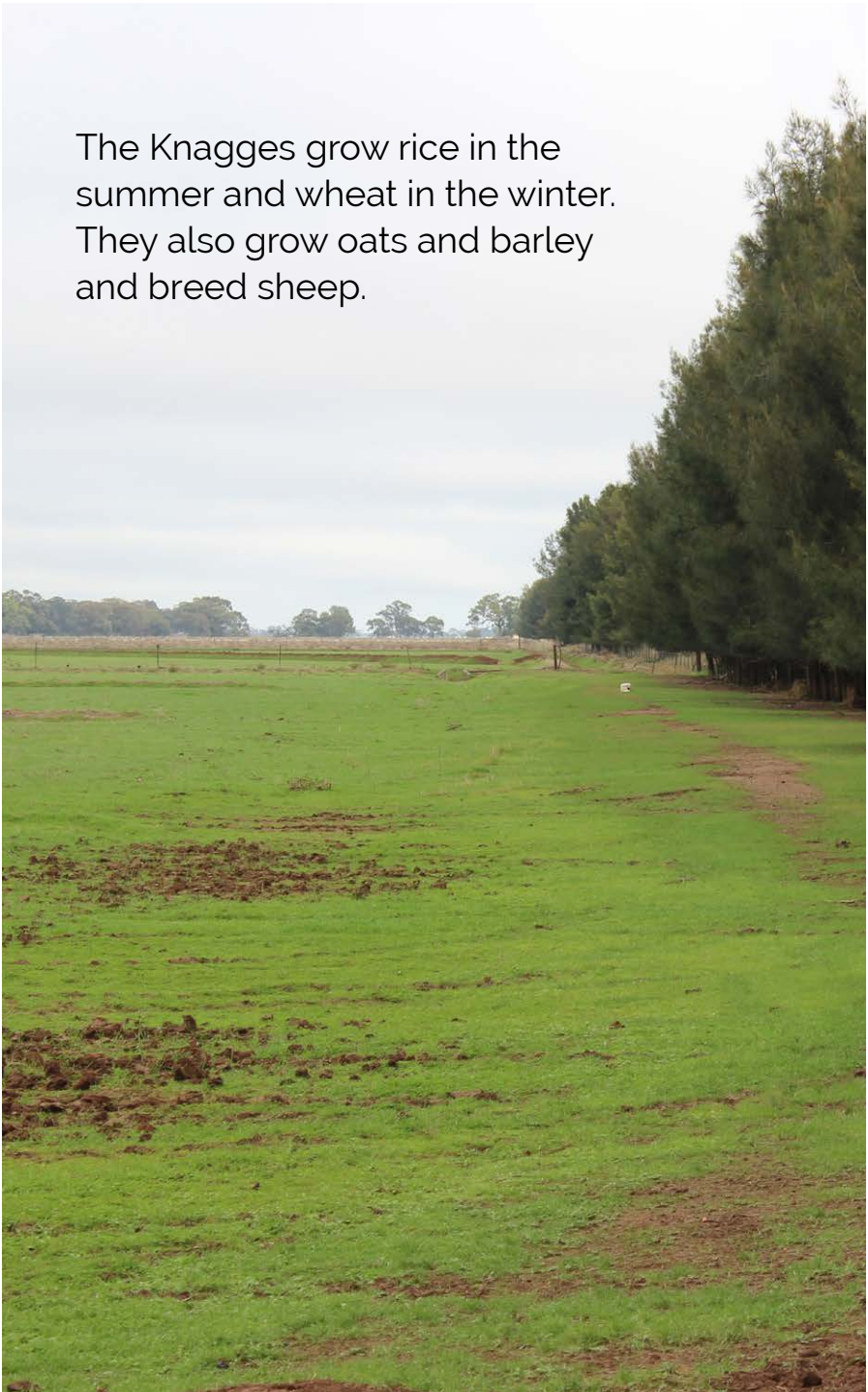




'Bimbil'

We visited 'Bimbil', the farm of local land heroes the Knagges. 'Bimbil' is one of the original irrigation farms in the Gogelderie area and has been in the Knagge family for three generations since the 1930s. Garry, Marg and their daughter Laura are the most recent members of the Knagge family to work and live on 'Bimbil'.

The Knagges grow rice in the summer and wheat in the winter. They also grow oats and barley and breed sheep.



Garry is very involved in the local community. He has been a volunteer with the rural fire service and involved in the Environmental Champions program. In this program rice farmers work to improve the environment on their farm through things like soil testing, controlling weeds and protecting endangered species of birds and animals.





Foxes on 'Bimbil'

Foxes are a big problem on the Knagge's farm because they kill and eat their sheep. The baby lambs are an easy target for the foxes in the lambing season.

On 'Bimbil' they have alpacas grazing with the sheep because the alpacas scare the foxes away.



Foxes in Australia

The European red fox has a rusty red body with a white belly and throat. It has black around the legs and ears, and a bushy tail with a white tip.

The European red fox was introduced to Australia over 150 years ago and it has become a huge pest around Australia because it threatens farm animals and native animals.



Controlling Foxes on 'Bimbil'

To try to stop the foxes from living on 'Bimbil' the Knagges have a special permit to use a bait called 1080 poison. Garry places the bait under the ground where he thinks the foxes are and then the foxes will eat it. He knows where the foxes are because he sees their tracks around the farm.





Weeds on 'Bimbil'

Weeds are a big problem on the Knagge's farm. The main weeds are the bathurst burr, silver nightshade, African boxthorn and scotch thistle.

Bathurst burr is native to South America and was introduced to Australia in the early 1800s. Bathurst burr can grow to about one metre high. The seed pods get caught in sheep wool and then the seeds are dispersed around the farm.



African Boxthorn is not a massive harm to the farm but it is one of Australia's most wide spread weeds. African Boxthorn can injure livestock and puncture vehicle tyres. It grows small, sweet red berries that birds eat and when they excrete (when they do droppings) it spreads the seeds.



Scotch thistle is another problem weed growing on 'Bimbil'. This weed is found all around New South Wales. It grows in warm temperatures and in cultivated areas on farms and road sides. Scotch thistle can be removed but the seed can stay buried in the soil for many years and still grow when the time is right.



Silver nightshade is probably the biggest problem weed on the Knagge's farm. Controlling silver nightshade on the farm is difficult because it can regrow if its root system is five centimetres or longer. It has many tiny seeds which can spread around the farm if you do not clean out machinery or vehicles. It has waxy leaves that stop chemicals from touching the plant.





Silver nightshade fruit (above) and seed (below).





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2015 Year 5/6, Whitton-Murrami Public School

CONGRATULATIONS

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and
the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the
2015 NSW Junior Landcare Team Award and will be
competing in the 2016 National Landcare Awards.



**Local Land
Services**
Riverina

