



The Place To Be

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Media release

From the Department of Primary Industries

“IS TIME RUNNING OUT FOR NATIVE GRASSLANDS?”

Now is the time for responsible landholders to protect Indigenous grasslands in western Victoria, as the region becomes one of Australia’s most threatened ecosystems, Department of Primary Industries Serrated Tussock Partnerships Officer Kellie Hose, said today.

“Highly invasive weed species such as serrated tussock and other man-made disturbances are threatening the livelihood of native grasslands,” said Ms Hose

“Only half of 1 percent of the original two million hectares of lowland grasslands remains in near-natural condition, and they contain the greatest number of species facing extinction.”

Ms Hose said serrated tussock was invading some of Victoria’s most endangered native grassland remnants and greatly reduced the diversity of native grassland species.

“Most remnants are now small, fragmented and highly degraded by weed invasion, property development, grazing and the application of agricultural chemicals.”

The impacts of serrated tussock on threatened species within endangered grasslands, is being increasingly recognised by scientists and farmers as a very serious problem.

Serrated tussock seedlings have a very low vigour, however the plant compensates for this by producing extremely large amounts of seed that is easily dispersed by wind.

“As man-made disturbances increase, serrated tussock continues to flourish in countries like Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, where the weed is established and is difficult and expensive to control.”

To minimise damage to native vegetation, early detection of serrated tussock is essential and careful physical removal of isolated plants is recommended.

For further information on serrated tussock or native grasslands please call 136186 or visit <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au>.