

Furneaux seabird conservation

The Tasmanian Weeds Action Fund (WAF) is a \$6.4 million state government initiative that supports farmers and other community organisations tackle weeds impacting valuable agricultural and environmental assets across the state.



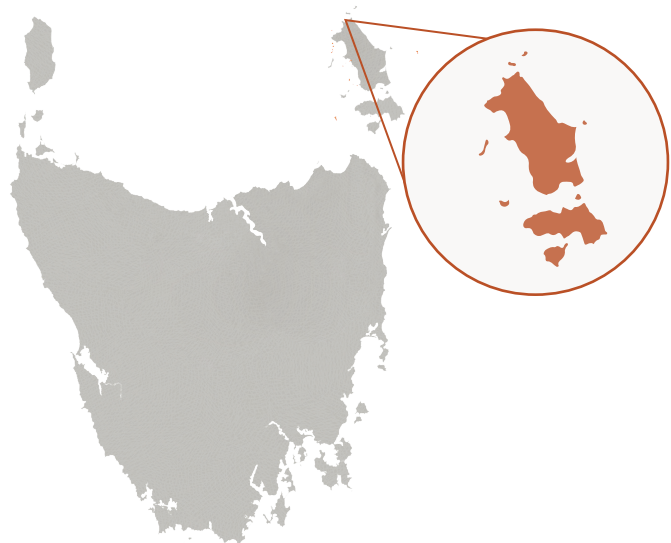
CASE STUDY

Shared responsibility

Underpinning the WAF is the concept of ‘shared responsibility’. Landowners, local government, and the community are encouraged to work together to identify and, where possible, eradicate priority weeds.

The initiative is also designed to support and drive shared responsibility through co-investment (of cash or in-kind resources) for the life of the program and beyond, to achieve long-term outcomes.

Project snapshot



WHERE

Offshore islands in the Furneaux group, approximately 140 km north east of Launceston

WHO

Wildcare and Friends of Bass Strait Islands

ACTIONS

Follow up weed control and removal of African boxthorn and mirror bush. Strategic release of fungal biocontrol measures to manage sea spurge

WHAT IS AFRICAN BOXTHORN?

African boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*) is a declared weed that can form dense thickets, reducing access and shading out native species

WHAT IS MIRROR BUSH?

Mirror bush (*Coprosma repens*) is a low growing shrub or small tree with thick glossy leaves that can completely smother all other vegetation

WHAT IS SEA SPURGE?

Sea spurge (*Euphorbia paralias*) is an invasive weed that displaces native vegetation and changes the structure of beaches



Weeds Action Fund Objectives

- Provide a strategic and targeted approach to tackling high priority weeds impacting agricultural and environmental assets
- Support landowners, local government and the broader community to make sustainable, long-term and effective actions to address high priority weeds with eradication as a key objective
- Improve the productive value of agricultural land and protect Tasmania’s natural values by removing the harmful effects of serious weed threats

- Encourage the concept of ‘shared responsibility’ for weed management and biosecurity in general and provide an opportunity for landholders to co-invest in removing the threat of serious weeds on their properties
- Ensure there is a strong coordinated link between the different levels of government and the Tasmanian community in tackling serious weeds



The Friends of Bass Strait Islands (FOBSI) project aims to protect more than 470 ha of seabird nesting habitat on offshore islands in the Furneaux Group in Bass Strait, and in several coastal reserves on Flinders Island.

These areas offer breeding habitat for seabirds including the Pacific Gull, Little Penguin, Short-tailed Shearwater, Black-faced Cormorant, Crested Tern, and Pied and Sooty Oystercatchers.

Part of the threatened native vegetation community ‘Seabird rookery complex’ is in this region and is vulnerable to the encroachment of African boxthorn and mirror bush.

FOBSI President Karen Ziegler said the group has been removing large infestations from offshore islands and key parts of Flinders Island for more than 20 years.

“The WAF funding allows our team to continue follow-up removal of seedlings and regrowth, which is vital for the long-term effectiveness of the project,” Ms Ziegler said.

“These islands are remote and challenging to access. It takes a coordinated effort to make this work happen.” - Karen Ziegler

Project delivery



Volunteers conducting primary control of African boxthorn at Emity Nature Recreation Reserve. Photo: Jean Jackson

The coastal weed sea spurge is also a project focus, as it poses a threat to shorebird breeding grounds. Following advice from the CSIRO, the fungal biocontrol agent *Venturia paralias* was released in strategic locations to provide ongoing control.

The project represents an important collaboration between local and state government, volunteers and community groups including Wildcare, Friends of Bass Strait Islands, Flinders Island Landcare, and Flinders Island Tree Action Network.

The works undertaken support and implement recommendations from Flinders Island Council and the Tasmanian Department of Natural Resources and Environment.