# BUGS FR BUGS

## Bugs for Bugs Update

Autumn 2018

### **Capital Hill capitalises on bugs**

Australia's Parliament house is one of our most iconic and magnificent buildings. Thirteen hectares of luxuriant gardens, including many internal courtyards, are attended by a team of dedicated professionals. IPM officer Leanne Clarke takes great pride in explaining to us how she and her team have implemented a range of IPM practices over the last 20 years. They are acutely aware of the potentially adverse impact of pesticides and are committed to ensuring that the gardens of parliament house are cared for in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.



Trent Davidson, Leanne Clarke and Paul Janssens from Landscape Services at Parliament House, Canberra

With experience they have found the benefits of making releases early before pests have had a chance to reach damaging levels. Regular 'top up' releases help to maintain beneficial insect and mite populations for best results.

Cryptolaemus ladybird beetles are released for mealybug control while Persimilis predatory mites, Spotted ladybirds and Lacewings are used against spider mites, aphids and a range of other pests. Regular releases commence in spring and continue through until April.

Leanne is also aware of the importance of regular monitoring for both pests and beneficial species and this forms an important part of their routine. When necessary, targeted soap or mineral oil sprays are used to provide additional control with minimal harm to the biocontrol agents. "Since we have adopted this approach we have experienced fewer pest problems and see more and more naturally occurring beneficial insects and mites appearing in our gardens to help our cause" says Leanne. New Bugs for Bugs 'beetle bag'

#### A new spotted ladybird for aphid and psyllid control in the south

H. conformis

We have added a new and exciting ladybird beetle to our growing range of bio control agents. *Harmonia conformis* is the southern equivalent to our already well-received *H. octomaculata*.

*H. conformis* is widely distributed from temperate to sub-tropical Australia where it is known to feed readily on aphids and psyllids.

### New 'beetle bags' aid ladybird establishment

Are you worried that the moment you open your jar of ladybird beetles they will take flight and leave your farm or garden, never to return? When you introduce ladybird beetles to your crop there is a simple way to ensure that they stay right where you want them to feed and establish a lasting colony - meet the new Bugs for Bugs beetle bag!

Research scientists have long used 'sleeve cages' as a technique to improve establishment of biological control agents. Building on this concept we have developed our own beetle bags, designed to slip over a small plant or limb - wherever there are pest 'hotspots'. Simply pop in a few beneficial beetles and tie off both ends. The confined beetles will feed, mate, and lay eggs into the pest population. Our beetle bags come in two sizes and are brightly coloured so that you can easily identify release points.

This simple yet effective tool takes the worry out of your ladybird releases and makes it easy for you to check on the progress of your new allies.

## Not sure how to release and take care of your biocontrol agents?

For our growing home garden market we have put together a couple of simple guides on what you can expect and how to get the best value from your biocontrol agents. You can access these guides through our website.



## Sustainable control of Silverleaf whitefly

Silverleaf whitefly is an invasive species that found its way to Australia 25 years ago. It continues to expand its range and has recently spread as far south as Griffith in NSW.

As a pest with a reputation for rapidly developing resistance to pesticides the only real solution is biological control. The tiny yellow parasitic wasp *Eretmocerus hayati* is uniquely adapted to just this task. We are receiving positive feedback from customers who use this beneficial wasp in an area wide approach. As always with this method, the best results are obtained when releases are started early in the cropping cycle and large areas are treated, even at relatively low release rates per hectare.



Silverleaf whitefly



E. Hayatí

#### **Hotspot treatment**

We recommend regular releases for most of our beneficials. Getting them established early and maintaining a presence in your crop helps reduce the risk of pest build up. However, if you do get hotspots of pest activity, it might be a good time to introduce lacewings.

Lacewings are general predators that can feed on a wide range of pests. We think of them as a 'biological insecticide'.



#### Staff profile: **Wes Allen**

Wes is the familiar voice on the end of the phone. Many of you will know him as the helpful dude who get things done and solves your problems.



Wes Allen

Wes was born in Mundubbera and joined our team 15 years ago. Since then he has made himself invaluable and we simply couldn't imagine running our business without him. While working at Bugs for Bugs Wes managed to complete a degree in Business Management.

Recently Wes made the move to our new head office in Toowoomba. He has worked hard to ensure a smooth transition with minimal disruption to our customers.



#### Eco-friendly packaging for Persimilis mites

In an endeavour to reduce the impact of plastics in the environment, we are pleased to announce a move to biodegradable packaging for our Persimilis mites. The new cardboard tube aligns with the packaging we already employ successfully for our other predatory mites.

Advantages of this packaging include:

- biodegradable and recyclable materials
- cardboard is more 'breathable', making a better environment for our mites
- the plastic red end-caps can be retained and sent back to us for re-use

As always we look forward to your feedback and will continue to strive to meet your needs as best we can.

Spalangía wasp -nuísance fly parasíte

Wayne Freeborn beside Spalangia wasp release unit at LPC

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#### Innovation pays dividends for Leppington Pastoral Company

Leppington Pastoral Company (LPC) is located in a beautiful valley west of Sydney. With a progressive business outlook they have a long history of innovation. Their high quality milk and related products are much sought after.

LPC have a strong commitment to sustainable agriculture and have embraced biological control as a principal component of their nuisance fly management program. Operations director Wayne Freeborn closely monitors emerging technologies and became aware of success in improved fly management at the cutting-edge Moxey Farms feedlot dairy in Central NSW. Wayne and his team oversee the release of the Bugs for Bugs *Spalangia* wasp mix fortnightly from early Spring until late Autumn. "This strategy is incorporated with a range of best practice nuisance fly management tools including fly population monitoring and improved manure control", says Wayne.

Our fly parasites are proving themselves in a wide range of situations across Australia. These include piggeries, chicken farms, feedlots, dairies and wherever nuisance flies proliferate. Following a significant research and development project spanning several years, Bugs for Bugs is now able to supply commercial quantities. Contact David Loxley (0459 974 960) for more details. Get in early to allow us to plan production.

## We would love to hear from you

We are constantly trying to improve our products and services. Please keep in touch and share your feedback with us. Contact us through our website or give us a call on:

#### 07 4646 2628

#### Follow us on Facebook

You can keep up-to-date with Bugs for Bugs news via Facebook at:

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#### **Explore our website**

Our website is a wealth of knowledge and information about sustainable pest management. View our product range, browse our 'what's your pest' section and much more at:

#### www.bugsforbugs.com.au