

# Roadside Vegetation Surveys

Goomalling  
October 2005



# The Task Ahead: Roadside Surveys

- 'snap shot' study of the condition of roadside vegetation.
- designed to allow people with or without botanical expertise to participate.
- left and right hand sides surveyed.



The information you record  
will help us to decide whether  
the roadside is...

High conservation value.



Low conservation value.



# Overview...

- ✓ An inventory of conservation values
- ✓ Useful for measuring changes over time
- ✓ Produces a map useful for landscape planning & management:

Weed control, Wildlife corridors,

Road works, Tourism,

Revegetation, Funding applications – NRM.



# Roadside Surveys...



- **Survey procedure**
- **Roadside attributes and examples**

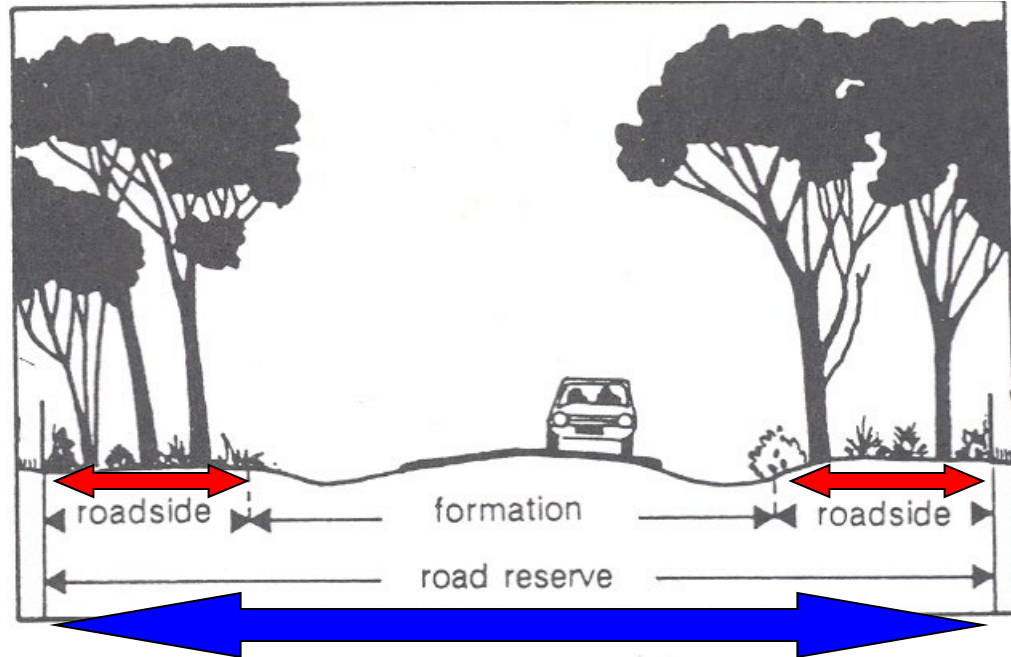




# Where is the Roadside?

The road reserve: ■

- road surface;
- shoulder;
- drain; and
- batter/back slope.



The remaining space is the roadside. ■



# Survey is vehicle based.



Remember SAFETY FIRST  
when driving slowly or  
stopping.

➤ Best done with 2 people per vehicle:

- Driver (observe) and
- Passenger (observe & record)

➤ In most instances the survey can be done at approx. 30km/h.

👉 *Average rate of survey is 20km of road per hour, so 100km = 5-6 hours.*



# You will need...

- ✓ checklist and map of roads
- ✓ pens/pencil, highlighter
- ✓ survey pack:
  - iPAQ;
  - User's Guide;
  - Power chargers.
- ✓ a good sense of direction, you **MUST** indicate direction of travel and odometer readings



*Make sure you know your left  
from your right!*





# Survey Procedure...



Roadside surveys are done in 'sections' along the road.

This allows you to record changes in vegetation condition.



# Survey Procedure...



- Always start the survey at an intersection
- At the start of the road, set your trip meter to 0.0
- Before you start driving, look at the roadside in front of you, record general details such as:
  - road name,
  - your name
  - direction of travel.



# Survey Procedure...

- Drive slowly along the road,
- Start recording the roadside attributes for left and right hand sides (more about these later),
- Continue driving until the road ends or until there is a significant change in condition of roadside vegetation.



# A Significant Change...

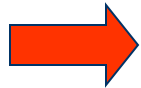
Some roadsides are uniform along their length, and so can be surveyed as *one section* from start to finish.



Other roadsides may be quite changeable. For example:

- ✓ adjoining landuse changes significantly, eg. from nature reserve to farmland;
- ✓ quality of roadside vegetation changes significantly, eg. from mostly native to mostly weeds.

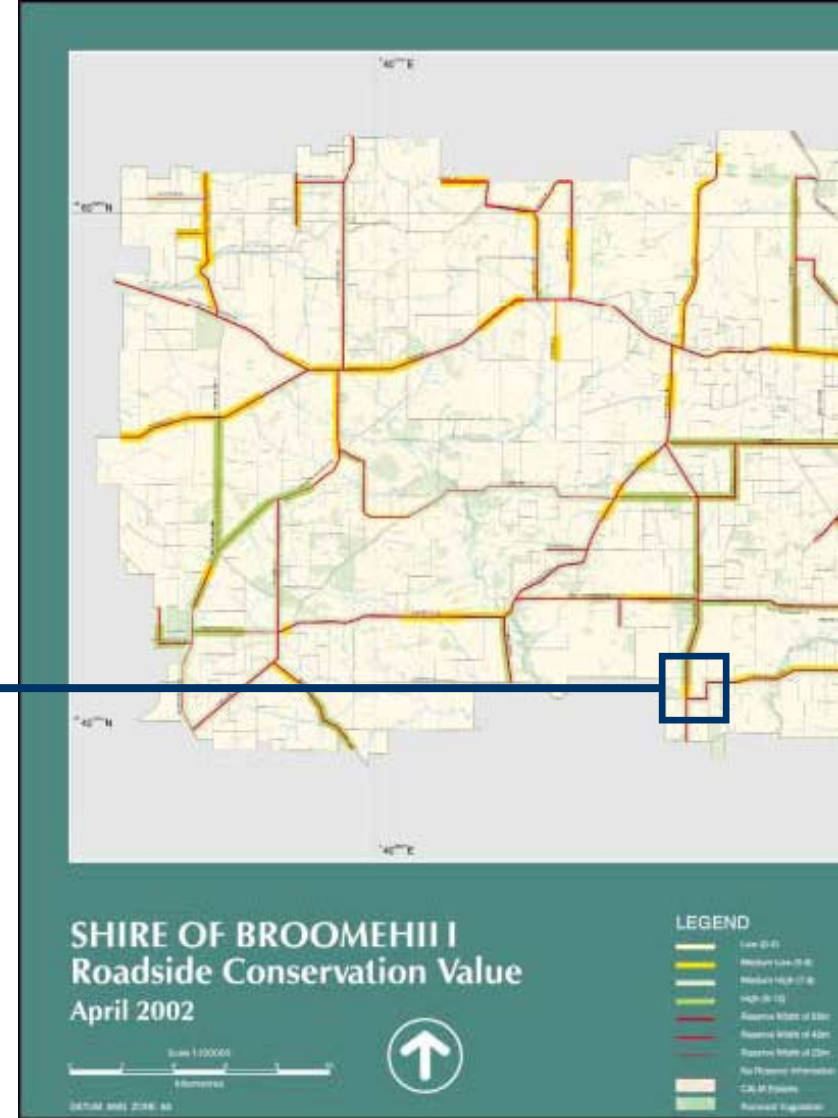
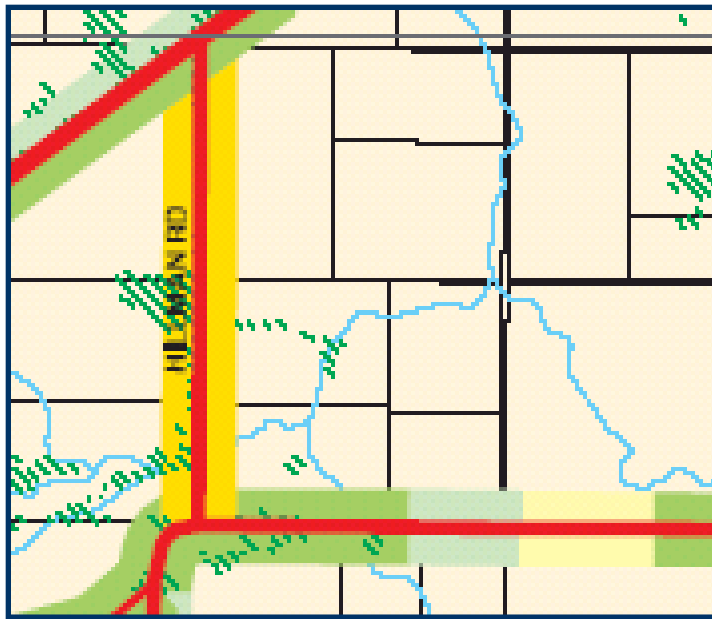
May occur on only one side or both sides of the road.



*Ignore small changes, i.e. less than 200m along the roadside.*



# Changing Sections




See how the colour (conservation value) changes along this road...?  
Each coloured 'section' reflects when they started a new survey section.





# Changing Sections Procedure...

1. Note the odometer reading at change over point, this will give the length of Section 1 of the road.
2. Section 2 will continue until another marked change is observed, when section 3 will begin, etc.
3. Each subsequent section is numbered accordingly for this road (1,2,3,4 etc).

 *Occasionally note down the odometer reading at a side road. This is very useful when mapping and checks the accuracy of your odometer!*



# Quick Refresher...



1. Would you start a new survey section if the:
  - weed cover increased/decreased dramatically?
  - adjoining land use changed from farmland to nature reserve?
2. Changes under ?? metres should be ignored?
3. Do you start a new section if the 'change' only occurs in one side of the road?



There's 10 roadside attributes to record ...



# 1. Width of Road Reserve

Historically, road widths were measured in chains (20.1m).

Select the width of the road reserve: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100m.





## 2. Native Vegetation on Roadsides

Most native vegetation communities have more than one distinct layer.

Woodlands often have small & large trees, a shrub layer & a ground layer containing reeds, everlastings and orchids.

If one or more of the layers is missing, the conservation value of the area is reduced.

**Large trees**

**Small trees**

**Shrubs**

**Ground covers**





## 2. Native Vegetation on Roadsides

Record whether the roadside contains a native tree, shrub and/or ground layer.

### NATIVE VEGETATION ON ROADSIDE

	Left	Right
<b>Tree</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Shrub</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Ground</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# 3. Extent of Native Vegetation

Is the native vegetation continuous along the road section, or interrupted by weeds or other disturbances? e.g, fire, soil, rubbish, stockpiles.

## EXTENT OF NATIVE VEGETATION ON ROADSIDE

	Left	Right
Less than 20%	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
20 -80%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
over 80%	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# 4. Number of Native Species

This is a measure of the diversity of the native vegetation.

Make an average estimate along the length of roadside. It does not have to be done in detail.

## No. OF NATIVE SPECIES

	Left	Right
0 -5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6 -19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVER 20	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## 5. Weeds

Estimate average 'weediness' over the section being considered.

It should be estimated as a percentage of total plants along the section.

**RIGHT:** majority of the total plants are weeds





# 5. Weeds



LEFT: Ground layer totally weeds



## WEEDS

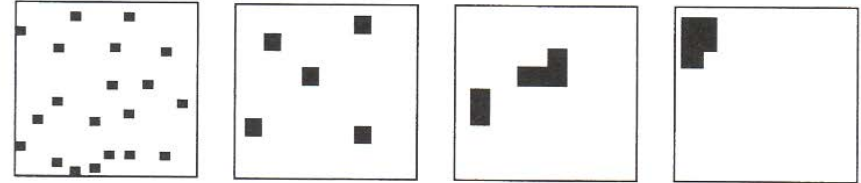
	Left	Right
Few weeds (<20% total plants)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Half weeds (20 - 80% total)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mostly weeds (>80% total)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground layer totally weeds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



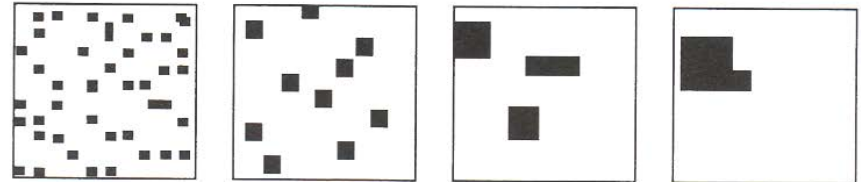
# 5. Weeds

Weeds may be clumped, or spread out within the road section.

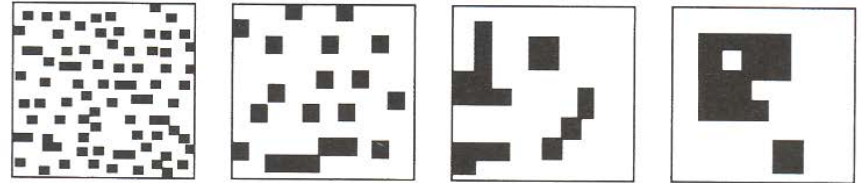
5% cover



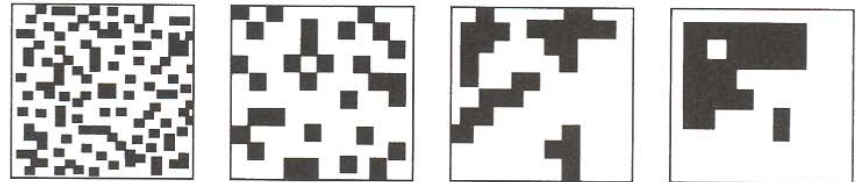
10% cover



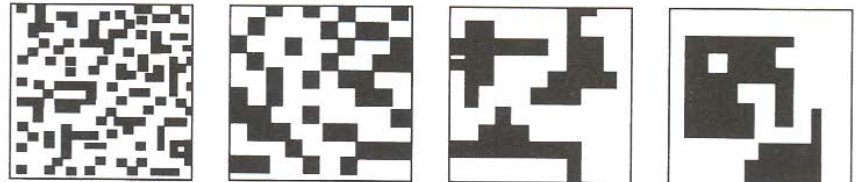
20% cover



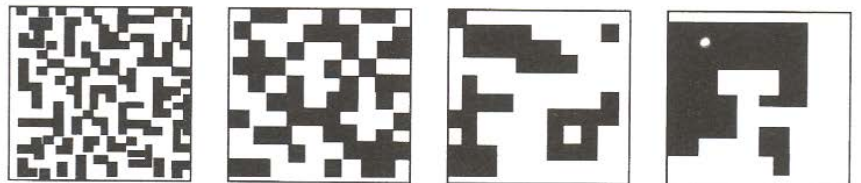
30% cover



40% cover



50% cover



# 6. Nominated Weeds

Record presence of these 6 weeds:

- African Lovegrass
- Cape Tulip
- Couch Grass
- Paterson's Curse
- Wild Oats
- Wild Radish



# 7. Value As a Biological Corridor

In cleared areas, the road reserve can be very important as a corridor, allowing the movement of fauna – especially birds – enabling them to seek out feeding and nesting areas.



## VALUE AS A BIOLOGICAL CORRIDOR

	Left	Right
Connects uncleared areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flowering shrubs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Large trees with hollows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hollow logs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



# 8. Utilities

Electricity, power lines and pipelines often built in roadside.

To construct and maintain them, the roadside vegetation may be destroyed. Their presence may be detrimental.



	UTILITIES	
	Left	Right
Utility Absent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Utility Present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	TYPE	
Water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electricity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telecomm.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# 9. Width of Vegetated Roadside

This is a measure of how much vegetation/land is left along the roadside. With practice, it is easy to recognise the width categories.



## WIDTH OF VEGETATION ON ROADSIDE

	Left	Right
1-5 m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5-20 m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
over 20 m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# 10. Adjoining Land-use

Different land uses have different impacts on the roadside.

Road reserves most valuable as conservation area where it acts as a corridor of remnant vegetation in an otherwise cleared landscape.

Record the *predominant* adjoining land use.



# Adjoining Land-use



## ADJOINING LAND USE

	Left	Right
<b>Agricultural crop or pasture</b>		
- completely cleared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
- scattered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Uncleared land</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Plantation of non-native trees</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Urban or industrial</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Railway Reserve</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Drain Reserve</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Other</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Adjoining Land-use



scattered



plantation  
non-native



completely cleared



Using the Ipaq's...



# Getting Acquainted...

1. Power: press & hold to turn screen on & off
2. amber flash= battery charging  
amber solid= battery charged
3. display screen
4. Stylus pen: slide up to remove, slide down to store

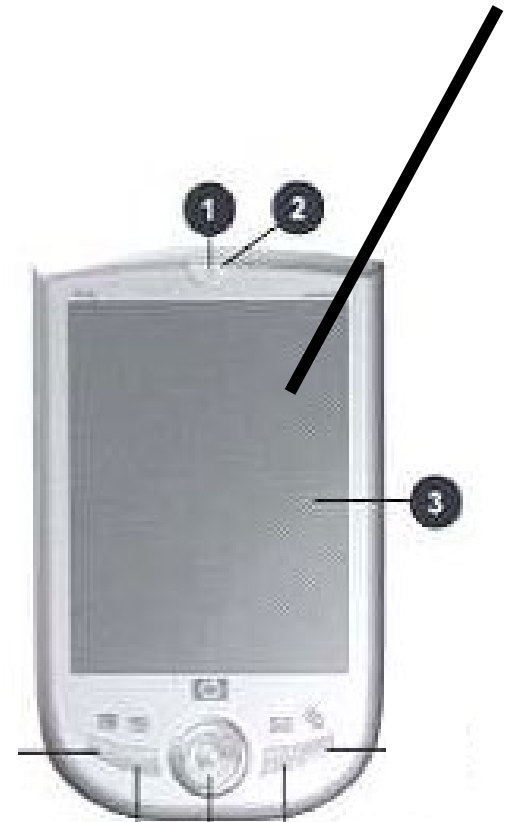




# Getting Acquainted...

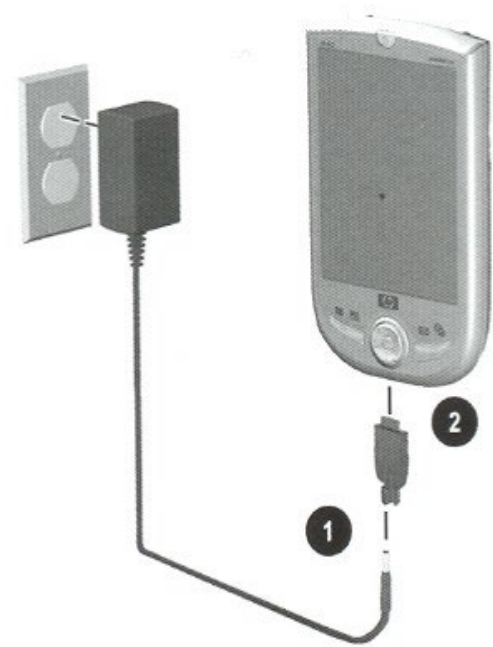
Use the stylus pen to tap or write on the screen.

- ✓ The screen is sensitive, so be careful with your fingers...
- ✓ Simply 'tap' the screen to select or open an item.
- ✓ Tapping is like pressing a keyboard key.



# Charging the iPAQ...

- Make sure the iPAQ is fully charged before use, and charge again at the end of each day. Approx. 4 hours.
- If the battery goes flat, you could lose your work!




# To protect your work...

- A program (*Sprite Backup*) saves your information onto a memory card daily at 5pm. If you are using it at this time, you may need to follow the prompt and tap 'OK'.
- Automatically backs up if battery is low. Press 'OK' if prompted to do this.

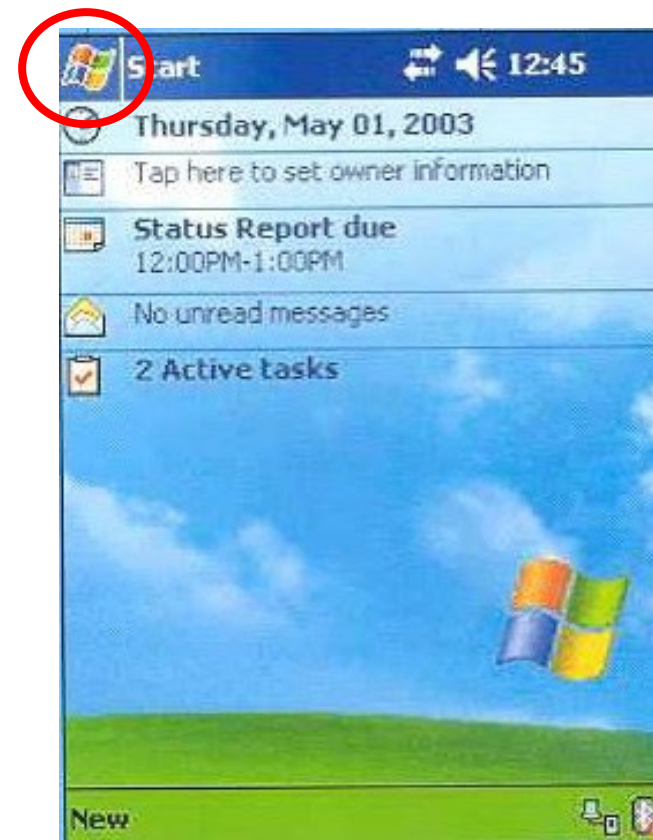


# Getting Started

1. Turn the iPAQ on;
2. Using the stylus pen, tap this icon:  (top left corner, next to the word 'Start').

3. Select '**RCC survey**'.  
The program may take a few seconds to start up.

*Make sure the device is fully charged.*



# Starting the Survey

1. Select the name of the Shire from the drop-down menu
2. Select the name of the road you are going to be surveying: **Test Rd 2**

If a road is not listed, select '**Add New Road**'.  
In the space provided, type the road name.  
Press **OK**.

3. You are now ready to begin the roadside survey for the selected road.

Tap 'Start'.

RCC Survey 4:58

Roadside Conservation Committee Survey

Select Shire **Katanning**

- Then -

Select Road

Add New

- Adam St
- Aerial Rd
- Andrews East
- Angle Rd
- Borlise Rd
- Boring Rd

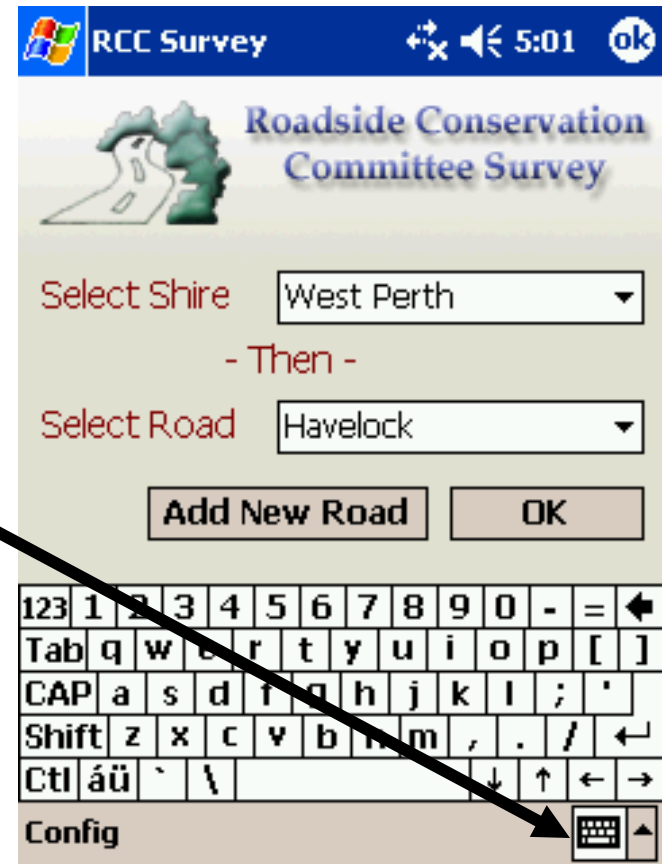
Config





# Starting the Survey

- There is a keyboard you can use for typing in details.
- It is located at the bottom right corner of the screen.



# Details

Record the following:

- **Section** number (1,2,3,etc).
- **Observer**.
- **Date**.
- **Width (m)**.
- **Direction**.

Go to the next tab, named **Location**.

RCC Survey

4:59 ok

Change Road Next Section

Section 10

Observer Will

Date 1/10/2003

Width (m) 40

Direction South

Details Location Land use Weeds

BDC Information Technology



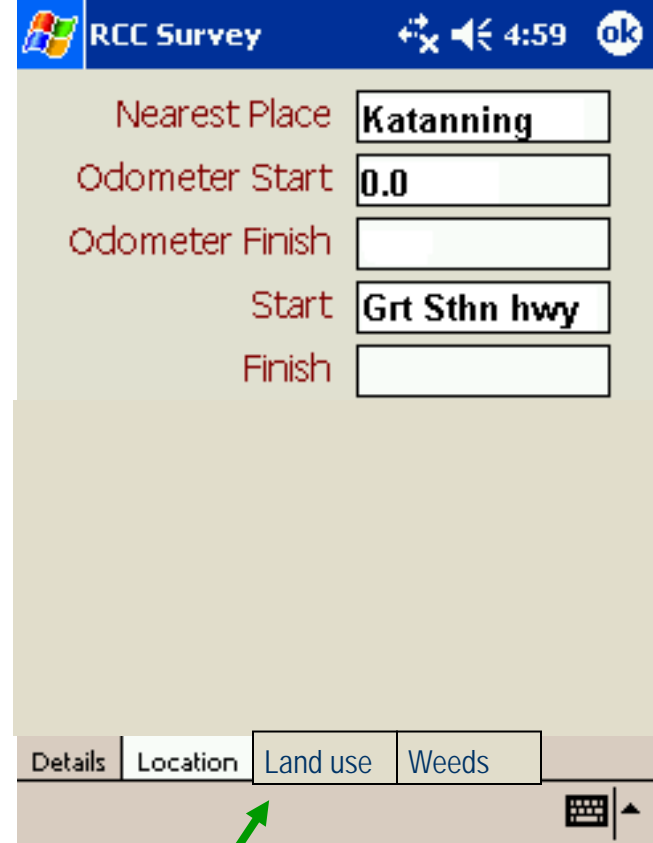
# Location

Record the following:

- **Nearest Place**
- **Odometer Start** (eg. 0.0);
- **Odometer Finish** (eg. 5.6);
- **Start:** start point, eg. Grt Sthn Hwy.
- **Finish:** finish point, eg. Boundary Rd.

**!** You will need to come back to this page later to fill in Odometer finish and Finish point.

Go to the **Land use** Tab



The screenshot shows the 'RCC Survey' application interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the Windows logo, the text 'RCC Survey', and system icons for Wi-Fi, volume, and time (4:59), along with an 'ok' button. Below the header, the 'Location' tab is active, displaying several input fields: 'Nearest Place' with the value 'Katanning', 'Odometer Start' with '0.0', 'Odometer Finish' (empty), 'Start' with 'Grt Sthn hwy', and 'Finish' (empty). At the bottom of the screen, there is a navigation bar with four tabs: 'Details', 'Location', 'Land use', and 'Weeds'. A green arrow points from the 'Land use' tab to the text 'Go to the Land use Tab' on the slide.

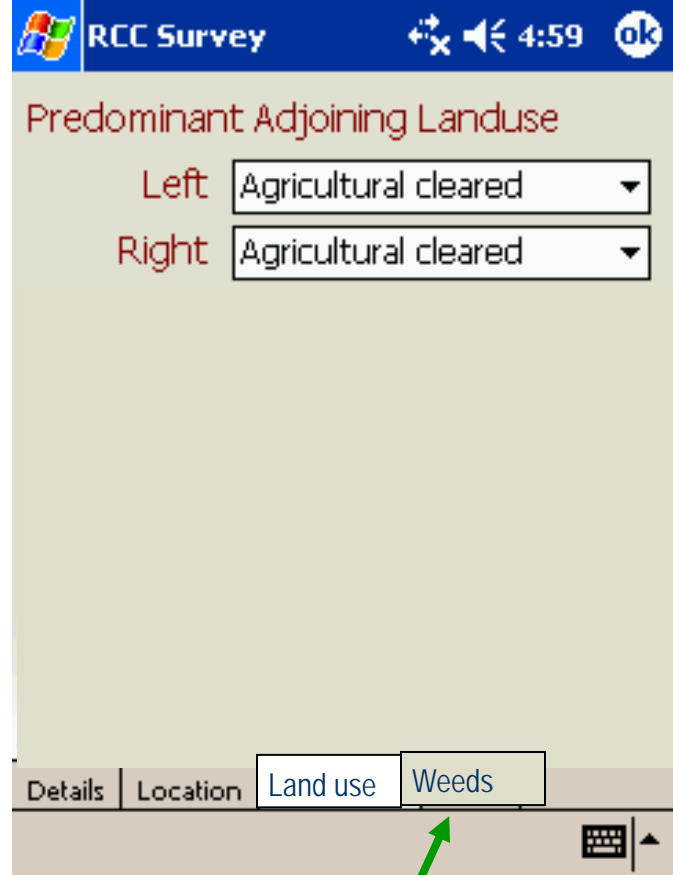


# Land use

Record the:

- **Predominant adjoining landuse:** select the dominant land use from the drop-down menu
- Remember to record both the left and right sides.

Go to the next tab, named **Weeds**.



RCC Survey 4:59 ok

Predominant Adjoining Landuse

Left Agricultural cleared ▼

Right Agricultural cleared ▼

Details | Location | Land use | Weeds





# Weeds

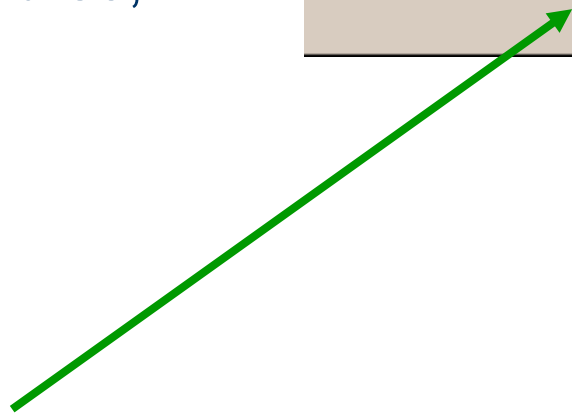
- **Predominant Weeds:** record the presence of 6 pre-determined weed species. Select from drop-down menu.
- African Lovegrass, Cape Tulip, Couch Grass, Paterson’s Curse, Wild Oats, Wild Radish
- Leave blank if not present.

Predominant Weeds

Wild Radish	

Land use Weeds Comments Items

Go to next tab,  
**Comments.**

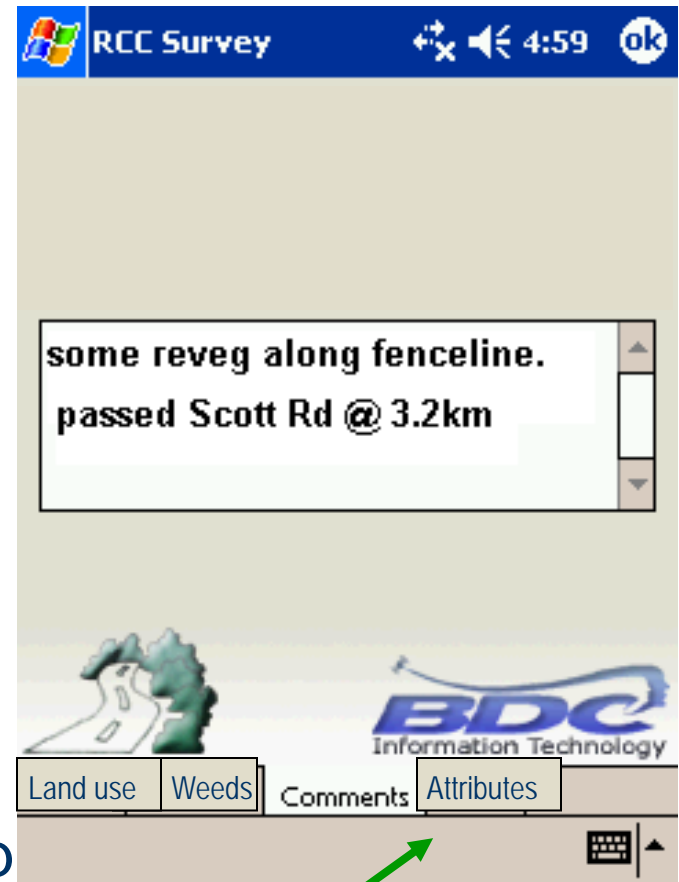


# Comments

**Comments:** you may like to enter other details.

- Occasionally note down a side road and the odometer reading. This helps greatly in the GIS map production.

Go to the next tab,  
named **Attributes**.



# Attributes

Record the **8 roadside attributes** that, when combined, make up the roadside conservation value.

Record the left and right sides independently.

The options will change from **red** to **green**, indicating that you have made a selection.

Press **Next**.

The screenshot shows the 'RCC Survey' application interface. At the top, there is a blue header bar with the Windows logo, the text 'RCC Survey', and system icons for volume and time (5:00). Below the header, the title 'Native Vegetation on Roadside' is displayed in red text, followed by 'Prev.' and 'Next' buttons. The main content area is a table with columns for 'Left' and 'Right' sides. The table has three rows: 'Tree Layer' (highlighted in green), 'Shub Layer' (highlighted in red), and 'Ground Layer' (highlighted in red). Each row has two checkboxes, one for the 'Left' side and one for the 'Right' side. The 'Tree Layer' row has a checkmark in the 'Left' checkbox. Below the table, there is a navigation bar with buttons for 'Land use', 'Weeds', 'Comments', and 'Attributes'. The 'Attributes' button is currently selected. At the bottom right, there is a keyboard icon and an upward-pointing arrow.

	Left	Right
Tree Layer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shub Layer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground Layer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Attributes

Tick the box if present and press 'Next'.

Record the other 7 attributes...

The screenshot shows a software window titled 'RCC Survey' with a blue header bar. Below the header, the text 'Native Vegetation on Roadside' is displayed in red. To the right of this text are two buttons: 'Prev.' and 'Next'. Below these buttons is a table with two columns labeled 'Left' and 'Right'. The table has three rows: 'Tree Layer', 'Shub Layer', and 'Ground Layer'. Each row has a checkbox in the 'Left' column and a checkbox in the 'Right' column. The 'Tree Layer' and 'Shub Layer' rows have their 'Left' checkboxes checked. The 'Ground Layer' row has its 'Right' checkbox checked. Below the table is a large empty rectangular area. At the bottom of the window, there is a navigation bar with four tabs: 'Land use', 'Weeds', 'Comments', and 'Attributes'. The 'Attributes' tab is currently selected. To the right of the navigation bar is a keyboard icon and an upward-pointing arrow.

	Left	Right
Tree Layer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shub Layer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground Layer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>





# Finishing the Section

- The last attribute page will be “Afghan Thistle”. Press **Next**.
- You will receive an error message:  
*‘Odometer finish cannot be left blank’,* press ‘ok’.
- Continue driving along the road until there is a significant change, or until the road ends.
- When this happens, pull over or slow down, enter the **Odometer Finish** and **Finish** point on the **‘Location’** page.



# Finishing the Section

On the **Details** page select either:

- **Change Road:** to begin surveying a new road, or
- **Next Section:** if you are still on the same road, and have to start surveying a new section.



The screenshot shows the 'RCC Survey' application interface. At the top, there is a blue header bar with the Windows logo, the text 'RCC Survey', and system icons for network, volume, and time (4:59). Below the header, there are two buttons: 'Change Road' and 'Next Section'. The main form area contains several input fields:

Section	10
Observer	Will
Date	1/10/2003
Width (m)	40
Direction	South

Below the form, there is a logo for 'BDC Information Technology' and a navigation bar with buttons for 'Details', 'Location', 'Comments', and 'Items'. A keyboard icon is visible in the bottom right corner of the application window.



# Roadside Surveys



- Roadside survey groups/teams.
- Volunteer forms filled out...?
- Map of Shire.



# Concurrent Sessions...

- A: groups of 4 to go for practice run (20 mins);
- B: others plan their survey teams and roads, mark onto a central map, and organise roster for using/sharing iPAQ's.



# Review



- Survey procedure;
- Roadside survey attributes;
- Using the iPAQ's;
- Survey teams and allocated roads;
- Roster to share iPAQ's;
- Other questions...





# Thank-you...

**For further information please contact**

**Christina Pailthorpe**

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**Roadside Conservation Committee**

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**E-mail: [ChristinaP@calm.wa.gov.au](mailto:ChristinaP@calm.wa.gov.au)**



# African Lovegrass

A large, tufted perennial to 1m tall, with greyish-green, often inrolled leaves. The inflorescence is an open or contracted panicle of greenish-purple (or blackish) flowers, to 40cm long. Flowers during spring and summer. Native to South Africa



*Eragrostis curvula*

Photos: J. Dodd & R. Randall

# Cape Tulip

A common weed of pastures, woodlands, granite rocks and limestone heath throughout the south-west. It is particularly abundant in the Avon/Swan valley and upper great southern. Prior to flowering in spring, infestations can be recognised at a distance from the brown tinge resulting from the dying tips of their leaves. Petals up to 4cm long.



*Moraea flaccida*

Photos: R. Knox & K.C. Richardson



# Couch grass

**Native to the Kimberly and other tropical areas worldwide, this grass is widely planted as a lawn. It invades wetlands and river edges in southern Western Australia.**



**Roadside** *Cynodon dactylon*

Photo: L. Fontanini





# Wild Radish

An annual herb, up to 1m tall. The leaves and stem usually bear bristly hairs and the petals are pale yellow, white or occasionally purple to lilac, 15-20mm long, often with dark veins. Economically one of the most important weeds of cropping in Western Australia. Flowers throughout the year but mainly in spring. Native to Europe.



*Raphanus raphanistrum*

Photos: J. Dodd





# Wild oats

**Wild oats are the main oat weed of cropping. Native to southern Europe, it is an abundant and widespread weed throughout southern Western Australia**



*Avena fatua*

Photo: J.D. Dodd



# Paterson's Curse

This large, coarse, bristly annual flowers in late winter and spring. Vegetative plants possess rosettes of broad, deep veined hairy leaves. Native to southern Europe, it is widespread.



Roadside *Echium plantagineum*

Photos: R. Knox & J. Dodds



# Afghan Thistle

Spiny all over, this perennial flowers in spring and summer. The spines cover all fleshy parts of the plant, including the calyx, which expands to cover the fruit



*Solanum hoplopetalum*

Photo: J. Dodd

