Native Grass Establishment Field Day

The Upper Torrens Land Management Project (UTLMP) Grassy Groundcover Restoration Project hosted a field day on Tuesday 18/11/14 at Mount Pleasant with Native Seeds Pty Ltd in a workshop focusing on native grasses.

The UTLMP has been involved in establishing grassy groundcovers in the local grassy woodland environment as a result of the Biodiversity Fund grant received from the Australian Government. Andrew Fairney, Project Officer for the UTLMP Grassy Groundcover Restoration Project, detailed the results over the last 3 years in establishing Seed Production Orchards on 13 private properties in the Upper Torrens catchment and the large area set aside at the Barossa Bushgardens in Nuriootpa.

The workshop provided an opportunity for nearly 30 community members, government advisers (including research scientists) and revegetation contractors, to learn about the latest techniques for enhanced germination of native grasses and improved presentation of seed for sowing. Discussion, led by Dr Ian Chivers, presented the advances from 7 years of work by Native Seeds Pty Ltd and the Kings Park Botanic Gardens, WA, on breaking dormancy in key grass species, including Weeping grass, Wallaby grass, Kangaroo grass and Red grass.

The workshop participants were able to see the results of the germination trials at the Mount Pleasant Seed Production Orchard and viewed the different treatments and controls as well as taking in the sight of 12,000 Wallaby grass plants growing in a controlled environment for their seed, which will be used in the revegetation projects managed by the UTLMP Grassy Groundcover Restoration Project.

UTLMP Project Manager Gerry Butler said that “this was a wonderful opportunity for the UTLMP team to show off the Seed Production Orchard, which is likely to produce in excess of 50kgs of Wallaby grass seed this year.”