

### *How did you come to be involved in NRM?*

I first became involved in NRM when undertaking revegetation and bush land management in northern South Australia and south east Queensland during the early 1990's. When I returned to WA, after completing a PhD in Queensland, I was employed by the Department of Agriculture and my work was about changing land practices to achieve NRM goals.

### *What are your biggest achievements in NRM?*

I would say that my biggest contributions have been the development of improved establishment systems for native plants and helping the re-establishment of a sandalwood industry in the Wheatbelt. 15 years ago when I started work on our native sandalwood, there were no commercial plantings whereas now there's over 15,000 ha planted, providing a commercial return and also real NRM benefits.

Such NRM benefits of novel agricultural ecosystems were crystallized for me last year when I witnessed malleefowl foraging in a sandalwood plantation – an absolute highlight for me personally.

### *Who or what inspires you?*

Many people have inspired me including plant scientists and several farmers. I also get a lot of inspiration from our native ecosystems. Understanding how these systems work enables us to mimic some components in novel agricultural systems.

### *What do you hope to achieve in the next five years?*

My short term aim is to ensure that all organizations and individuals that conduct revegetation activities adopt improved establishment systems that I've developed. Our farming systems are highly reliant on annual fertilizer inputs and my longer term aim is to see whether we can use native legumes to recycle nutrients that have moved beneath the root zone of annual crops and pastures.

### *What are the biggest challenges facing the South Coast environment and how can these be met?*

Managing weeds, pests/diseases and the impact of people are the biggest challenges. Environmental weeds such as love grass are very damaging to our remaining bushland estate and we need to be serious about controlling this species. Ensuring a productive and sustainable agricultural sector will also be challenging as our climate changes and as access to some inputs becomes limited by supply.

*Geoff was the winner of the NRM Medal for Excellence in 2010*

