



## February 2025

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### Summary

AS of 14 February 2025, Qfly populations have levelled off after building up during the first half of January 2025.

While the heat will have killed some eggs and larvae inside infested fruit, many will survive if the fruit falls into the shade of weeds, grass and canopies of host plants. Also, most adult Qfly will have found refuge from the heat and dryness in broadleaved evergreen trees or may have migrated to gardens and orchards.

Weather forecasts for March 2025 point to upcoming favourable conditions for Qfly survival and population build up with higher than normal maximum and minimum temperatures and possibly slightly more rainfall than usual. Home garden, public garden and orchard irrigation will improve Qfly survival and build up, especially now that commercial crops are beginning to ripen in the GMV. The majority of GMV's fruit crops are highly favourable hosts to Qfly.

Now is the time to ensure all unwanted fruiting plants, or their fruit, are culled from home gardens, front yards, around sheds, along creek banks, nature strips, abandoned or untended fruiting plants and Government land. Continued active management is necessary to avoid population build up in late summer and autumn 2025.

### GMV Fruit Fly Hot Spots

Lemnos	Merrigum	Kyabram
Ardmona	Shepparton	Invergordon
Katunga	Coomboona	Mooroopna
Orrvale	Tatura	Shepparton East
Kialla	Koonoomoo	Tatura East

## **Location Effect**

Average Qfly numbers/trap/week are currently higher in some locations than others. This is reflected by the volume and type of Qfly host plants in each location as well as the level of fruit fly management being employed there.

Some sites, such as Merrigum and Lemnos, have just started Qfly build-up while others, such as Invergordon, Kialla East and Mooroopna, have declined in Qfly numbers. These changes are due to changing fruit maturities. Other sites, such as Kyabram and Shepparton appear to be more persistent hot spots probably due to the presence of a much larger mixture of plants fruiting at different times during the season.

## **Land use type**

Peri-urban trap sites are showing an increasing trend in Qfly numbers while numbers in urban traps declined during the second week of February. This could be due to the majority of fruits having been harvested or eaten by birds in urban sites thus promoting the migration of Qfly into peri-urban areas. Despite a jump in early February in rural locations, Qfly numbers are still low but fruit crops there are now beginning to ripen and these will become a powerful attractant for Qfly to move from urban and peri-urban areas into commercial cropping areas.

Individual rural sites which have high Qfly numbers at this time are likely to have persistent Qfly populations surviving in untended home gardens and untended non-commercial fruit trees on the block.

As urban crops decline with harvest, hot, dry weather and bird predation in the summer the numbers of Qfly found in traps also decrease while peri-urban and rural increase. This reflects the movement of Qfly from urban, through peri-urban and into rural areas from mid-summer to autumn. This occurs due to the “pull” of large volumes of commercial crops ripening in rural areas at this time.

## **Weather**

### ***Current weather trends compared with previous years***

Current rainfall accumulation is low and this will have an impact on both fruit set and Qfly reproduction and survival. This benefit, however, will be moderated by irrigation.

Temperature trends over the past four seasons show maximum temperatures being significantly higher than previous years – and for a prolonged period up to 14 February 2025. This situation, especially with the low rainfall is likely to be unfavourable to Qfly except under irrigation.

### ***Long-range weather forecast overview***

Issued: 13 February 2025 (<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary/> - accessed 17 February 2025).

The long-range forecast for March indicates:

- warmer than average days are likely to very likely across most of Australia, with an increased chance of unusually high daytime temperatures across much of the country

- warmer than average nights are very likely across Australia, with an increased chance of unusually high overnight temperatures nationwide.

### ***Rainfall***

The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) predicts (<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks> - accessed 17 February 2025, Fig. 8) a 55% to 60% chance of more rainfall than the average for the GMV (10mm to 50mm for March) meaning that March rainfall should be close to, or slightly above, average. This condition is marginally favourable to Qfly survival and proliferation although irrigation will offset any disadvantage.

### ***Maximum temperature***

Predicted maximum daily temperatures in the GMV are highly likely (65% to 75% chance, Fig. 9) to be warmer than usual (27°C to 33°C for March in the GMV). These conditions are mostly favourable to Qfly survival and population build up, especially if under irrigation. If temperatures reach much above 34°C exposed Qfly eggs, larvae and adults may perish. However, eggs and larvae in fruit on the ground (in the shade) will survive and adults will move to cool, shady and moist locations in dense broadleaved evergreen plants until the weather becomes more suitable.

### ***Minimum temperature***

Predicted minimum daily temperatures in the GMV are very highly likely (greater than 85% chance, Fig. 10) to be warmer than usual (9°C to 15°C for March in the GMV). These conditions are favourable to Qfly survival and population build up especially when daytime temperatures are above 15°C which is the case in much of the GMV during March.

### ***Forecast***

The Qfly forecast is that Qfly populations will increase in the GMV from early summer into autumn. At this time Qfly will move from urban areas, through peri-urban sites and into neighbouring rural locations. This build up can be slowed down or even eliminated with sound and effective area wide management strategies that commence early in the season and are maintained throughout the year.

## Area Wide Management Activities

*Shepparton - Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025.*

Program Coordinator Ross Abberfield addressed hundreds of people inside the Sikh Gurduara Sahib Temple in Shepparton. Following melodic prayers beneath chandeliers and ceiling fans working against the afternoon heat, the local Sikh community learned techniques and strategies about how to manage Queensland Fruit Fly. English and Punjab fruit fly information was distributed among the crowd and attendees displayed great interest in learning about the control and management of fruit fly. Ross and leaders of the Sikh community discussed future fruit fly education activities for the Sikh community over a traditional lunch.



L to R: Fruit Grower Gurmeet Singh, Program Coordinator Ross Abberfield, Tatura Grower Arman Singh and temple member Prabhjot Singh.

*Shepparton – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025.*

Project Support Officer Whitney Nankervis held a women's only fruit fly workshop of Arabic women within the Greater Shepparton area. Working with Shepparton Council's Multicultural Development Officer, Mariola the No Flies on Us Program engaged with Shepparton Ethnic Council to deliver the well-received informative session. The participants were excited to learn about fruit fly control methods for their own home grown produce, with lots of questions being asked and discussions held.

Shepparton – Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025

The Calder Woodburn Memorial Avenue was planted between 1945 and 1949 by Mr Fen Woodburn as a living memorial to his son Calder who lost his life while serving with the RAAF during WW11. The Avenue is the grandest and largest of the Second World War commemorative planting in Victoria and is important for its use of only Eucalyptus species. Unfortunately, incursions of prickly pear (a fruit fly host plant and restricted weed in Victoria) were detected in the Avenue and assistance was sought by the Calder Woodburn Memorial Avenue Advisory Committee. Fruit Fly Coordinator Ross Abberfield inspected the site with Committee Representative, Jan Sinclair and undertook the free removal/eradication of detected stands of illegal prickly pear within the Avenue.



Calder Woodburn Committee Member, Jan Sinclair and Fruit Fly Coordinator Ross Abberfield inspecting the Memorial Avenue.



Rochester - Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025.

A great day was had by all attending the 137<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Northern Show at Rochester on Saturday 22/02/2025. Attendees experienced a premier Horse Show, Cattle Judging, Working Dog Demonstration, Homecrafts, Carnival Rides, Kids Fun Hour, Whipcracking, Food Trucks and NO FLIES ON US! was there distributing Fruit Fly show bags and information packs to the crowds. Program Coordinator, Ross Abberfield also took the opportunity to catch up with program volunteers from the Rochester Lions Club and representatives from the Campaspe Shire Council.



Rochester Lions Club members Liam Hackney, Paul Butler, Julia Butler and Coordinator Ross Abberfield.



Coordinator Ross Abberfield with Campaspe Shire representative Lachy Cousins



Coordinator Ross Abberfield with Rochester Lions Club members Julia Butler, Anne Chirnside and Carmen Moon.

For more information of Fruit Fly Area Wide Management visit [www.fruitflycontrol.com.au](http://www.fruitflycontrol.com.au) or scan the QR code. If further assistance is required in managing fruit fly, contact the Goulburn Murray Valley Fruit Fly Office by phoning 03 58325202 or emailing [fruitflycontrol@shepparton.vic.gov.au](mailto:fruitflycontrol@shepparton.vic.gov.au)



Information Packs Available From  
Customer Service:

Campaspe Shire Council  
Greater Shepparton City Council  
Moira Shire  
Strathbogie Shire Council  
Berrigan Shire Council

#### GMV REGIONAL FRUIT FLY PROGRAM



GMV Queensland Fruit Fly actions are funded by the Victorian Government Fruit Fly Regional Grants Program