

North Coast WEED READ

No.17 WINTER 2008

Newsletter for the NSW North Coast Weeds Advisory Committee

We circulate each March, June, September and December. Please send information to the Secretary in the month before publication.

Now, what's going on in weeds....

COURSES, WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES

Weed Worries Field Day 19th July. Tiaro, Burnett-Mary region, Qld. Training sessions will be on integrated weed management; identifying native & exotic aquatic plants, walk and talk identifying woody weeds and control options, biological control of catsclaw creeper, application equipment and safety. Registration 9am. Entry fee \$5 includes morning tea and sausage sizzle. For more info ring Lyn at Tiaro & District Landcare (07) 4129 6206 email: tiarolandcare1@bigpond.com

Chemcert training

25 July & 1 August 2008. Grafton. 9am-4.30pm. From 1 Sep 2003, training became compulsory under the Pesticides Act 1999 for commercial users of herbicides. Herbicides can be dangerous if incorrectly applied or managed. Training aims to minimize mistakes being made so that workers, their families, the community and the environment are protected. Refresher courses are required every five years. Contact 6621 9588 or email lismore@envite.org.au

Chemcert Training

8th & 15th August 2008. Lismore. 9am-4.30pm. See description above. Contact 6621 9588 or email lismore@envite.org.au

2008 Weeds Forum "Caring for our Country"

9am 14th August Nambucca Heads RSL. This Forum is aimed at community members, volunteers, landowners, CMA, Council and Agency staff. Sessions include The Big Picture, Regional Issues, Emerging Weeds and On-ground projects. For further info please see "Weed News" text box on this page, ring Meri Oakwood 6653 8843, Reece Luxton 6643 3820 or visit the NCWAC website www.northcoastweeds.org.au

National Weedbusters Week 1-7 September 2008 Factsheets available from: www.weedbusterweek.info.au/publications.htm

Chemcert training

19 & 26th September 2008. Coffs Harbour. 9am-4.30pm. See description above. Contact 6621 9588 or email lismore@envite.org.au

2008 Queensland Landcare Conference

21-24 September. Monto. The theme of this conference is "Infinity: Sustainability by Design". The program will include special keynote speakers, interactive workshops, lively plenary sessions, regional field trips and a trade exhibition with more than 20 exhibitors.

Contact Samantha Morris on (07) 3012 7617 or at sam@wombatcreative.com.au. Registration packages are now available. Visit www.landcare.org.au/Conference.htm

W E E D N E W S

2008 Weeds Forum "Caring for Our Country"

9am 14th August Nambucca Heads RSL. This Forum is aimed at community members, volunteers, landowners, CMA, Council and Agency staff. Sessions include The Big Picture, Regional Issues, Emerging Weeds and On-ground projects. The program is still being finalised but topics include weeds & climate change, catsclaw biocontrol program, weed issues on organic farms, the "Grow me instead program", potential weed invaders from the south and north, and case studies of successful on-ground control projects including bitou bush, camphor laurel and catsclaw creeper. There will also be some industry displays. For further info please ring Reece Luxton 6643 3820 or 0427 279 717, Meri Oakwood 6653 8843 or 0423 910 324 or visit the North Coast Weed Advisory Committee website www.northcoastweeds.org.au

Registration will be \$40/head (incl GST); this includes lunch, morning & afternoon tea. Registrations are now open – please register by 5th August, so that we can plan catering. To register please send a cheque or money order (payable to NSW North Coast Weeds Advisory Committee) to Guy Bezrouchko, PO Box 230, Far North Coast Weeds, Lismore NSW 2480 or ring (02) 6623 3833 to pay by credit card. Payment is preferred before the day but can be made on the day if necessary (chq or cash only). Tax Invoices can be provided

All communications to the Secretary

NSW North Coast Weed Advisory Committee, Locked Bag 23, GRAFTON NSW 2460

Phone (02) 6643 3820

Fax (02) 6642 4496

E-mail: reece.luxton@clarence.nsw.gov.au

www.northcoastweeds.org.au

SOME UP COMING FUNDING

Caring for our Country grant applications

Funding is available for projects in three priority areas – biodiversity & natural icons, coastal environments & critical aquatic habitats, and sustainable farm practices. Grants range from \$80,000 to \$400,000 favouring larger scale projects that have the capacity to achieve significant outcomes. Applications close 1st August 2008. For more information visit the website www.nrm.gov.au/funding/open.html

NRCMA River Reach Program 08-09

Funding for landholders along a stretch of at least one kilometre of creek or river frontage who are prepared to work together to develop a management plan. This can lead to further opportunities for on-ground work. Closing date 15th August. For the Richmond/Brunswick/Tweed Catchments please contact Amalia Short or Jai Sleeman on 6676 7392 For Clarence/Bellinger/Coffs Coastal Catchments Peter Menzies 6642 0612 and Nambucca/Macleay /Hastings Catchments Laurence Radin 6561 4966 or for more information check the website www.northern.cma.nsw.gov.au

Westpac Operation Backyard

Since 1998, Westpac Operation Backyard has helped 277 environmental projects in local communities across Australia. Westpac employees can apply for funding for environmental projects in which they are involved as volunteers. Landcare Australia administers the projects to ensure that they offer real environmental benefit. Any environmental group or non-profit group may be eligible for assistance. The amount of funding currently available is up to 50% of the environmental costs. Program guidelines can be obtained from David Hehir (03) 9662 9977 david@landcareaustralia.com.au

Norman Wettenhall Foundation Environmental Grants One of the objectives of the Foundation is to build capacity in local communities to effect long-term beneficial change in the natural environment. Organisations and individuals can apply. There is a preference for projects that are innovative, have a long-term effect, encourage individuals, disseminate information and result in publication. Projects that involve collaboration with a number of partners across a region are of special interest. The Foundation is currently funding two landscape restoration projects. Next closing date: 30 September 2008. Contact Therese Reidy (03) 9650 3188, email admin@nwf.org.au or visit www.nwf.org.au

The Australian Green Grants Guide 2008

- * Quick and easy access to over 300 environmental and heritage grants
- * Grants for a wide range of projects and funding limits available on a national and state-wide basis
- * Easy to use indexes to find which grants your council is eligible for. The Guide has been updated and expanded since 2007 to include a further 50 grants. For more information contact Sharne Pulmmer at Molino Stewart Pty Ltd on (02) 9354 0300

- WEED WARNING -

MOSSMAN RIVER GRASS

Cenchrus echinatus



(Photo credit: www.nt.gov.au)

Mossman River Grass is a clump forming annual grass growing to 80cm high. This species is distinguished by seed heads with 12-14 burrs in clusters. Each burr is a ball 4-10mm long with backwardly directed barbs.

Mossman River Grass germinates in spring and summer in temperate zones and flowers most of the year in tropical areas.

This species is originally from North and South America. Mossman River Grass often grows on sandy soils especially along the coast. It provides good grazing when young but is a major weed if allowed to mature. This grass is a weed of many tropical and subtropical crops as the plant competes for moisture, nutrients and light.

This grass is spread by seed; burrs. The burrs attach to animals, clothing and bags. Burrs reduce the value of wool and make shearing hazardous. Spines of burrs penetrate hides of livestock and cause problems in recreation areas as they can penetrate bare feet. They float and are moved by water.

The most effective control method is to kill young plants before they set seed. This can be done by cultivation, hand pulling, burning with flame jets or steam jets or by spraying with herbicide. Please contact your local Weeds Officer or DPI office for details of the most suitable control methods in particular situations.

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www.northcoastweeds.org.au

NEW BOOKS, CD-ROMs etc HOT OFF THE PRESS!!!

Misbehaving Plants May 2008

By Susanna Greig, Weeds CRC

This book was written for primary school children and includes an introduction to weeds, a narrative story, a cartoon strip and factual information relating to weeds. There are lesson suggestions at the end of the book. The book can be downloaded from www.weeds.crc.org.au/for_schools/misbehaving_plants/html or to receive a free hard copy please ring Susanna Greig (02) 6773 2809



“Some plants are called funny names. This plant is called “fat hen””

The Introduced Flora of Australia and its Weed Status by R. P. Randall 2007

This book is an invaluable resource for anyone who cares about the Australian environment and wishes to ensure that the plants chosen for revegetation projects, landscaping and gardens are not likely to become weedy and a threat to our Bushland. Every introduced plant species, past and present, in Australia is listed in this publication, with information on its weedy status here and worldwide. Can be downloaded from the web www.weeds.crc.org.au/publications/index.html

Coming soon.....

Weed Management for Organic Farmers, Growers and Smallholders. By Gareth Davies, Becky Turner and Bill Bond in association with the Henry Doubleday Research Association Crowood Press. Expected July 2008. This well researched book covers all aspects of organic weed management. Excellent reading for organic farmers, advisors, consultants, agricultural students and all those who have an interest in weed management theory and practice in organic farming systems. The authors provide a practical guide to weed management practices on organic farms in temperate areas. This book examines the scientific and organic principles underlying weed management and considers their implications for weed control. Will be available from CSIRO Publishing at www.publish.csiro.au or by ringing (03) 9662 7666 or 1300 788 000

Subtropical rainforest restoration

Updated edition currently being finalised. Will be available through the Big Scrub Environment Centre www.bigscrub.org.au

Environmental Weeds of Australia DVD-ROM

By S.C. Navie and S. W. Adkins, The University of Qld. This DVD-ROM is a comprehensive and easy-to-use identification tool that includes more than 1000 species, about 300 of which are covered in great detail. Provides detailed descriptions of the major environmental weeds of Australia, accurate and up-to-date information about the current and potential impacts, distribution and reproduction and dispersal mechanisms of these species. Links to management information are included, along with notes on how to distinguish them from similar native species.

Will be available from www.weedinfo.com.au

Watch this space for further details.....

Free Wollemi Pines

Landcare Australia and Wollemi Australia are offering every group registered on a National Landcare/Coastcare Directory a “dinosaur tree” – the renowned Wollemi Pine that was once thought to be extinct. If your group is not already registered then please consider adding your name to the Directory. To collect your free plant contact Richmond Landcare Services at Kyogle 6632 3722 or Envite at Lismore 6621 9588. The trees are currently about 50cm tall, healthy and worth about \$60-70. They might grow best in less humid areas such as the eastern fall of the Tablelands. In the spirit of Landcare, each Wollemi should be used for public display and planted at a location such as a park, primary school or project site.

USEFUL RESOURCES

A Field Guide to Australian Fungi by Bruce Fuhrer 2005.

A definitive field guide covering more than 500 species with 538 superb colour photographs. Information on fungal biology, ecology, classification, distribution and roles of fungi in the environment. This book is the culmination of many decades of fieldwork. Publisher: Bloomings Books, Melbourne. Can be ordered through CSIRO Publishing www.publish.csiro.au



(Photo credit: Peter Foster)

Abstract: Comparison of three weed control methods: chemical, flame and hot water by M. Hewitt, K. Bullen and D. George. *Australian Society of Agronomy*

There are some situations where non-chemical weed control methods are required such as on organic farms, in the presence of landowners with chemical sensitivities or in highly sensitive environmental situations. Consequently investigation of alternative methods to suit various situations is highly beneficial. In this study two forms of thermal weed control, flaming and hot water application, were compared with the herbicide glyphosate on the basis of efficacy of weed kill.

The principle of thermal treatment is to target weeds for short periods, less than one second, with intense temperatures, at, or greater than 100°C. Thermal weed control destroys plant cellular material, coagulating plant proteins, thus disabling respiration and normal plant functioning.

The experiments were held on a surrogate oat crop and a weed infested pasture at Gatton College Horticultural Field Section. An Aquatech® unit, with handheld spraydeck was used for the application of hot water, whilst a Jet4® flamer (LPG fired), also hand operated, was used for flame operation. Control plots were used as a reference for a visual rating. Plot size was 30m². Glyphosate solution (1:25) was applied at 3L/plot. LPG consumption was measured at 125kg/ha and water consumption averaged 410L/plot.

Thermal treatments required two applications to be fully effective. With repeat application, hot water was equally as effective as glyphosate on these weeds. Flaming was not as effective. Targeting juvenile plants produces greater efficacy. Further study into alternative techniques of weed control for various situations is highly recommended.

To view the full paper visit:
www.regional.org.au/au/asa/1998/6/315hewitt.htm

Editors note: Do any readers use flaming or hot water for weed control? If so, I'd be very interested to include your experiences in a future Weed Read. Thanks

Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle & Richmond Valley LGA (Far North Coast Weeds area) update

Fresh applications were called for the position of Weed Services Coordinator closing on 15 May 2008 and a decision is pending. As an interim measure, a former Rous Water staff member (John Rutledge) is filling the position on a part time basis and was able to liaise with other Committee members to ensure the grant applications were completed by the due dates. Please accept our thanks for the cooperation extended to John in his efforts to provide the information necessary for the various applications, which were due in early May.

Management of Noxious Weeds

In general terms, wet weather hindered weed spray operations. In an effort to ensure completion of the control programs for which grants have been received, contractors are being utilized for specific programs such as Camphor Laurel, Yellow Bells, Broad Leaf Pepper, Celtis and Tallow.

Management Strategies for Class 1 and 2 Weeds

As a result of the flood occurring in the Richmond River system during January 2008, Class 1 and 2 water weeds were able to fragment and new infestation sites were subsequently detected. Heavy rain in the Northern part of the County at the same time caused similar issues. In accordance with the objectives, Weeds Officers have tracked movements of Water Lettuce, Hymenachne and Alligator Weeds wherever possible. Resources were then allocated to map the distribution and provide an eradication strategy.



Water Lettuce

(Photo credit: Rod Ensbey)

Control of Class 3 weeds on Public/Vacant Crown Land

Groundsel Bush and Giant Rats Tail Grass are the priorities in this category. In this regard, mapping as a result of inspections continues and eradication on roadsides continues to prevent the weeds becoming more wide spread and allow more effective negotiations with landholders who have major control issues.

Management of Class 4 weeds on Public and Private Land

With Lantana and Bitou Bush being the priorities for this category, funds still available in the budget will be allocated to achieve control works to effectively reduce the infestation densities in the final quarter of this financial year.

Inspection of Rural and Urban properties

Staff absences and wet weather continued to hamper the efficiency associated with a structured and strategic inspection program. Time spent by inspectors has been absorbed by re-inspection of properties occupied by uncooperative landholders and attention being given to new outbreaks of Class 1 weeds.

The inspection program is being reviewed to provide more realistic targets for the Noxious Weeds Officers. More emphasis will be placed on the Weeds Officers to structure their programs and be more accountable for issuing weeds notices and re-scheduling inspections than is currently the case.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS:

Extension Activities

A further round of Bushland Friendly Nursery Scheme (BFNS) brochures have arrived which provide a guide to identification, control and replacement of environmental weeds with native alternatives. These are an excellent resource for identification of environmental weeds to compliment the County's noxious weed information.

Staff attended two field days funded by the CMA and administered by Landcare held at Tatham and Bonalbo, while a Mysore Thorn information day was conducted at Dunoon.

Staff were also involved in the National Hymenachne Committee that met at the Wollongbar DPI Offices on 12 May 2008.

Liaising and coordination with Constituent Councils

The County continues with special programs for Lismore City Council on Cock's Spur Coral Tree (*Fabaceae*), Richmond Valley Council for Celtis, Tweed Council at the Vintage Lakes and Ballina Council at Lake Ainsworth (*Salvinia*)

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

Contract Spraying Service

A recent project involved providing information to consultants associated with the Ballina By-pass. The actual work request was beyond the physical capacity of current resources. However a proposal was submitted for County staff to project-manage contractors on the job to ensure the desired results are achieved.

Asset Replacement Program

A new twin reel Quickspray® unit was purchased to improve productivity in the central/southern area in April. A five year replacement program will be developed with the 2008/2009 Management Plan to provide a structured approach to ensuring that obsolete equipment is disposed of and new equipment is purchased in a timely manner to maximise productivity.

Provision was also made for the replacement of 'toughbook' computers. These computers are considerably more expensive than office laptop computers, however, use in the field is quite harsh on the electronics, so the additional investment at a time when more reliance is being placed on this equipment, seemed appropriate.

Environmental Awareness

No actions were reported which may have an adverse effect on the environment.

Forests NSW – Far North Coast

Work on the Forest Die Back trial is continuing in Donaldson State Forest/Mt Lindesay State Forest. Burning is continuing.

One hectare of Groundsel Bush was sprayed in Dyrabba State Forest

One hectare of Groundsel Bush was cut and swabbed at Mt Lindesay State Forest.

Clarence Shire Update

Co-ordination

Following the last NCWAC meeting a trip was arranged for the National Lantana Management Group members to demonstrate the work on Lantana management in the Clarence Valley. Wet weather disallowed the group to inspect the Adaptive Trials being run in the Upper Copmanhurst and Mylneford areas, however Council was able to demonstrate the extent of Lantana infestations and the broad range of issues relating to its management on public and private properties. Thanks to Rod Ensby, Chris Clausen and Bill Jordan who hosted the trip.

Applications for NSW DPI grants were completed on time and many thanks to fellow NCWAC members in co-ordinated and co-operative effort on Regional Group Project applications.

I would like to make note of the increased spread of Easter Senna *Senna pendula* var. *glabrata* (formally known as Winter Senna). Its distribution is now far greater than its coastal confines and is located as far up as Nymboida, Glenugie and Jackadgery, displaying effective invasive qualities. It is recommended that a pest status assessment be undertaken to determine whether it should be nominated as a declared noxious weed.

Aquatic weeds are continuing to be a problem for Council, particularly within the Alamy Creek catchment. Enforcement procedures are ineffective with definition of the property boundaries unclear with varying tenures across the creek system. It is hoped the reintroduction of a water weeds management group would provide a means for tackling this issue.

Presentations were given to cane growers in the Lower Clarence as part of the BSES pre-season 'shed meetings'. Staff made a presentation on the identification of Alligator weed and other aquatic weeds to look out for, as well as promote the work of Council on noxious weed management. Displays on noxious and environmental weeds were also promoted at the Grafton and Maclean Shows.

Meetings attended

- Bitou bush workshop, Coffs Harbour – provision of updates for national mapping project and input for new manual and monitoring guidelines
- CVC Landcare/Dunecare Liaison Group meeting – provision of Bitou bush and coastal weed mapping
- Attend North Coast Weed Officers meeting, Coffs Harbour

Meetings attended for NCWAC

- Finalising NRIPAS, Weed Planning Contract and CMA 6 projects – NRCMA and Meri
- NWAC subcommittee meeting no. 3 – Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation (teleconference)
- Attend MNCWAC meeting, Port Macquarie and report on NRIPAS and Noxious Weed Guide

Inspectorial

Work by the Weed Officers targeting noxious tree weeds has resulted in a large number of Chinese tallow trees removed from private properties. Success is mainly due to effective negotiation by the Weed Officers and support from Council to assist in removal of up to 36 trees in urban situations.

New inspections on properties were conducted as required in the areas of Lawrence, Tyndale, Carrs Creek, Cowper, Glenugie, Stockyard Creek and Pillar Valley with evidence that landholders are effectively dealing with their noxious weed problems. There were no Section 18 notices served in the last period, which shows the effectiveness of the Weed Officers to gain compliance as required. Aerial inspections were undertaken on 12 May, with a run done along the coast to determine effectiveness of Coastal weeds works. Survey was complemented with HD video capture to provide baseline for future monitoring of work on coastal vegetation rehabilitation. Properties in the Upper Clarence areas were targeted by aerial inspections for a variety of noxious weeds, with minimal Groundsel bush identified.

Tally

Quarter 3 – Jan to Mar 2008: 678 inspections + further 174 reinspections were carried out (290 clean, 349 weeds found, 49 clearance, 0 Sec 18 notice, 0 Sec 20 notice).

Operational

CVC welcomed two new staff members in the Noxious Weeds section as Weed Control Operators. Chris Goodman and Jody West have started in the last quarter and have been sent straight into Bitou bush work. Council has also appointed two full time Bush Regenerators who will assist with coastal weed work from time to time. Operations continue to be constrained due to wet weather. Up to 15 days have been lost to rain.

Staff undertook training in aquatic weed identification and pasture plant identification run by NSW DPI and Clarence Landcare.

Projects

- NR CMA (via NCWAC) projects
 - 81356-010 - CMA 5 – West Clarence Vine Weeds – \$5000
 - *high priority location of Mysore thorn in Cunglebung Ck – follow-up control work completed and report finalised*
 - 81356-011 – CMA 5 - Clarence Moonflower - \$2000
 - *follow-up control completed on Susan Island and report finalised*
 - 81356-002 – CMA 5 - Clarence Bitou Bush and Coastal Weeds - \$5100
 - *report finalised*
- Council projects
 - 994354 – Clarence Valley Bitou bush TAP project - \$29000 (over 2 years)
 - *funding for implementation of Threat Abatement Plan on two Category 1 sites; Wooli and Angourie*
 - *final strategic control of Bitou completed and monitoring of impact on threatened species*

Weed control for this quarter included:

Alligator Weed – 2 days (survey)
Bitou Bush – 10 days
Giant Parramatta Grass/Giant Rats Tail Grass – 2+ days
Groundsel bush – 14 days
Lantana – 2 days
Mysore thorn – 4 days
Privet – 2 days
Prickly Pear – 2 days
Salvinia and Water Hyacinth – 4 days
Chinese Tallow – 5 days

Other Projects:

- Coastal Weeds CMA5 – 8 days
- Cunglebung CMA5 – 10 days
- Moonflower CMA5 – 4 days
- Formosa Lily – 1 day
- Council (various)- 15 days
- Shannon Creek Lantana – 3 days
- Lantana Adaptive Trials – 2 days

Forests NSW – Clarence

- Half a hectare of Groundsel Bush control at Barcoongere State Forest
- Groundsel Bush Control in Whiporie State Forest

Proposed work:

- Further control of Groundsel Bush in Barcoongere State Forest
- Follow up control of Mysore Thorn Pine Brush State Forest

NSW DPI – Grafton Weeds Unit

Hymenachne – Weed Alert

Hymenachne (*Hymenachne amplexicaulis*) is a Class 1 noxious weed and a Weed of National Significance. This semi-aquatic grass was introduced from South America in the early 1990s and planted in Queensland, the Northern Territory, Western Australia and NSW to provide 'ponded pasture' for cattle. Despite being a source of winter or dry-season cattle fodder in some areas, hymenachne has invaded natural wetlands, watercourses and sugar cane land in QLD. *Hymenachne* is an aggressive invader of freshwater systems forming pure stands that excludes other plant species. It reproduces vegetatively and by seed and can grow in up to 4m of water.

Hymenachne has now invaded more than 1000 hectares of wetlands and other freshwater bodies in Qld and Northern Territory, impacting on the biodiversity of flora and fauna in these habitats. During 2005 *Hymenachne* was found growing in the mid Richmond Catchment, south east from Casino. It had been planted as a ponded pasture and along drainage lines for grazing purposes. A number of satellite infestations have also been found in the surrounding area. *Hymenachne* in NSW is subject to an eradication program, being funded by an Australian Government Defeating the Weeds Menace grant with local and state government support. Far North Coast Weeds is implementing the program. The National *Hymenachne* Management group is meeting in Alstonville on the 13-14th of May to discuss and inspect the NSW infestation and other relevant national planning issues.

For further Hymenachne information see;

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/weeds/profiles/hymenachne

www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/4790_8068_E_NA_HTML.htm

Noxious Weed Grant Applications 2008-09

Applications have been received and will be collated and assessed during May and June for consideration by the Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee at its next meeting.

Weedy Sporobolus Grasses Manual is proving very popular and is still available through the NSW DPI Bookshop in Orange, via our website or call 1800 642 065

Lantana Biological Control agent *Aconophora compressa* is moving southwards along the NSW north coast. *Aconophora* was first released in SE QLD in 1995 and in northern NSW in 2000. During 2003 *Aconophora* was found causing off target damage to Fiddlewood trees and Duranta plants in suburban Brisbane. Initially there was considerable interest from garden groups about the off target damage, but it has been shown that the benefits of the biological control agent far outweigh any incidental issues. *Aconophora* has now moved as far south as Coffs Harbour and Urunga causing useful lantana damage along the way. For further information on *Aconophora compressa*, biological control and lantana generally see;

<http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/xbcr/dpi/IPA-Aconophora-PA27.pdf>

http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/4790_8801_E_NA_HTML.htm

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/weeds/profiles/lantana>

A new **Weed Risk Management** process has been developed by DPI and supported by the NWAC. The NSW WRM system aims to provide a standard, nationally accepted and transparent process to help make decisions about the introduction, declaration and prioritisation of weed species. Stephen Johnson, NSW DPI Weed Ecologist will be presenting an overview of the new system at the Weed Forum later this year.

Coffs Harbour Update Inspectorial

An ongoing programme of property inspections resulted in notices being issued for Groundsel Bush, Chinese Celtis, Broad Leaf Pepper Tree and Yellow Bells. Compliance in the Woolgoolga area had not been good and S18, S20 Notices and one Entry resulted in most of the work being carried out.

A Toughbook and GPS have been purchased to allow for increased efficiencies during inspections. This will allow data to be entered in the field and eliminate the double handling of information.

Planning for Bitou Bush control in conjunction with DECC is well underway. An aerial programme in the Moonee Nature Reserve, Coffs Coast Regional Park and VCL at Emerald and Corindi/Red Rock is planned for early June using Precision Helicopters based in Coffs Harbour.

All grants were completed on time, thanks to all who contributed this year.

I attended the Fireweed Field Day in Dorrigo conducted by Bellingen Shire. A well-attended and informative day.

Operational

Roadside Weeds – this has been the main focus principally for Lantana, Groundsel Bush and Crofton Weed.

Private Works – completed two large Groundsel Bush jobs and one Lantana job in Bellingen Shire and several in Coffs Harbour.

Salvinia – good results being achieved using Reglone at Sapphire and Bucca.

Works Branch work – kerb and gutters, drains, guideposts and guard rails, sewerage treatment works sprayed on a regular basis.

Contract Work – bush regeneration teams have been employed to remove Lantana and some major environmental weeds from riparian and other sensitive sites at Boambee Headland, Sawtell Headland and reserves in Coffs Harbour. At Sawtell this work complemented regeneration works previously carried out with NRCMA funding.

Future Activities

- I will be attending the National Fireweed Conference in Bega on 28 and 29 May 2008
- Completion of roadside Camphor Laurel programme for 2008
- Completion of roadside noxious weed programme
- Completion of Management Plan for the Removal of large Broad Leaf Pepper Trees on Private Land at Sapphire

Bellingen Shire Update

No report received.

Forests NSW – Bellingen

Proposed work:

- Follow up control of Groundsel Bush in Tarkeeth State Forest

Nambucca Shire Update

Inspectorial activities

Throughout the first quarter of 2008 inspections were carried out throughout various areas of the Shire. Fortunately no Class 1 or 2 noxious weeds were identified to be established within any lands in the Nambucca Shire.

Class 3 weeds that were identified included Groundsel Bush, Chinese Tallow and Yellow Bells. Weed identification letters and subsequent notices were issued to those landholders who were not implementing sufficient weed management programs within their lands. A high level of compliance was achieved through regular contact with landholders and re-inspections of lands that were weed affected. A new infestation of Giant Rats Tail Grass was identified in the Upper Taylors Arm area, which the landholder suspects was introduced by cattle purchased from out of the area – a reason to implement quarantine procedures when introducing unknown cattle to a property.

Class 4 weeds that were identified during this quarter included:

- Noogoora Burrs – these invasive weed species were mainly confined to riparian areas, with a higher number identified to be growing than the same time last year, given the excellent growth conditions that have been experienced this year.
- Camphors and Privets – these weed species are gaining greater recognition by landholders as being of concern, with many reports that creeks are reducing in water flow and aquatic life is reducing where riparian zones are heavily infested with these species.
- Fireweed and Giant Parramatta Grass – a reduction in the germination rates of fireweed has been observed this year, possibly attributed to greater growth of pasture this season.

A large number of landholders expressed concern over Bahia and Coolatai Grass as these are becoming more prevalent throughout the Shire. The lower fodder value and invasiveness of these species have raised graziers awareness and identification of different species.

| | |
|--|-------|
| Total number of inspections | 226 |
| Number of letters requiring control (Sect 18A) | 3 |
| Section 18 – notice to control | 0 |
| Section 20 – enforced control | 0 |
| Total area inspected (hectares) | 13941 |
| Total area weed infested (approx. hectares) | 944 |

Forests NSW – Nambucca

Proposed work:

- Yellow Bells control in Mistake State Forest commencing with HRB on site and follow up spraying or re-growth.

DECC

Repair to Country Project

Four Aboriginal trainee bush regenerators and a supervisor were employed to work on significant Aboriginal cultural sites; mainly Endangered Ecological Communities such as *Themeda* grassland and littoral rainforest. Approx. \$400, 000 obtained so far, with two more funding applications in, so should allow them to complete Certificate 3 in Conservation and Land Management.

Bitou Bush Threat Abatement Plan

Control of Bitou Bush and other weeds on four headlands in Moonee Beach Nature Reserve was carried out using contractors, field staff and the Repair to Country team. Expanding works to surrounding areas. NHT and NPWS funded works at Bare Point/Wilsons Headland and south Sandon/Sandon Bluffs in Yuraygir National Park and Middle Bluff, Ten Mile Beach/Bombing Range Bundjalung National Park, Iluka Nature Reserve and north Sandon. Work was carried out by bush regeneration contractors, spray contractors and field staff.

Bitou Bush Aerial Spraying

Aerial sprayed approx. 45 hectares of bitou bush in Moonee Beach Nature Reserve. Perfect spray conditions that day – one of the few fine days in mid June. Program undertaken with Coffs Harbour City Council. Area sprayed; 170 hectares in Yuraygir National Park and 150 hectares in Bundjalung.

CMA Coastal Weeds Project

Completed bush regeneration projects in littoral rainforest at Valla Nature Reserve, Bongil Bongil National Park, Redcliff & Pebbly Beach, Yuraygir National Park, Woody Head and Bundjalung National Park as part of NRCMA project.

Restoration/regeneration projects

Coordinated planting of 2000 trees in Junuy Juluum National Park and 1300 in Moonee Beach Nature Reserve. Coordinated bush regeneration projects in Bindarri NP, Yariabinni NP, Moonee Beach NR, Bongil Bongil NP, mistflower control in Nulla Nulla creek New England NP and on-ground and aerial control of blackberry in Guy Fawkes River NP. Undertaking planning for large-scale restoration of Brinerville addition (Upper Bellinger) to New England NP. Extensive Lantana works in southern Bundjalung, also at Pigeon Gully in Yuraygir SCA and Ramornie Forest Camping Area where splatter gun application is being effective. Follow up in large section of Iluka NR targeting bird-dispersed weeds and Susan Island works where moonflower and

balloon vine control are a priority. Cats Claw control in Mt Pikapene NP.

Guidelines/handouts/publications

Produced/circulated guides on New England Tablelands Weeds, Nambucca Threatened Species, Coffs Harbour Threatened Species and Weed control checklist and summary of best management practices. Iluka Bluff and Sea Acres bitou work to be used as case studies in Bitou Bush Best Practice Manual. Sea Acres work to be published in Ecological Management and Restoration

The information contained in this Newsletter is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing / compiling (30 June 2008). However, because of advances in knowledge, readers are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer from the NCWAC or appropriate member organization or the user's independent adviser.

When using herbicides always read and follow the label and ensure that the herbicide is registered or there is an appropriate permit for the intended use.