

Weeds Impacting Coffs Coastal Area

Major wide spread Coastal weeds species include

- Bitou Bush,
- Glory Lily,
- Lantana,
- Cassia, ,
- Ground Asparagus,
- Tradescantia,
- Madeira Vine,
- White Passionflower,
- Rhodes Grass,
- Broadleaf and Giant Paspalum
- Kikuyu,
- Ochna,
- Mile a minute,
- Morning Glory,
- Blue Billy Goat Weed,
- Crofton Weed

Site-specific coastal weeds (weeds that have become very dominant in certain areas but are not as yet widespread)

- Fish bone fern,
- Climbing Asparagus Fern,
- Broadleaf Pepper Tree,
- Chinese Celtis,
- Coral Tree,
- Groundsel Bush,
- Japanese Honeysuckle,
- Mother of Millions,
- Painted Spurge,
- Turkey Rhubarb,
- Acacia saligna,
- Cape Ivy,
- Coral Berry,
- Japanese sunflower

Sleeper Weeds on the coast

(Weeds that are not yet dominating large areas but are widespread)

- Murraya paniculata,
- Umbrella Tree,
- Cocos Palm,
- Cherry Guava,
- Brazil Iain Cherry,
- Corky Passionfruit,
- Camphor Laurel,
- Pink Euodia,
- Formosa Lily,
- Ardisia

In my time as a bush regenerator working in this area I have found Glory Lily the most challenging weed to control.

Glory Lily is widespread in the Coffs region from Tuckers Rock to Boambee

Glyphosate or Brush-off when used at standard rates is not entirely successful at killing the plant or its underground tuber, which reshoots the following spring after treatment. Jeff Thomas of Grafton NPWS, after several years trials, has found Glyphosate and Brush-off combined, with LI700 as the surfactant, gave the most consistent results. Brush-off is used at 1g to 10litres with 50:1 glyphosate. Control will take several years spraying regrowth and seedlings as it appears only a certain percentage of Gloriosa is eliminated in any given year. As yet no site in this area has had success with complete control.

Glory Lily appears in late spring and dies off in early winter. To reduce the severe off target damage spraying is carried out early in the season (November) while the Gloriosa is still small and then a follow up treatment is also required later in the season (February-march) to control seedlings that have germinated after the initial treatment. Timing if these treatments is dependant on the weather, as Gloriosa tends to come up late with a dry winter/spring.

It will take a concerted effort by all authorities over a period of time for effective control of this weed. One aspect that has made the task difficult is the lack of

research and understanding of Gloriosa growth habit/ physiology. It may require extensive research before we can truly beat a tricky little customer like Gloriosa.

One of the most rewarding sites we have worked on the coast has been Dolmans Point near Sawtell. An area of diverse vegetation types such as Littoral Rainforest, Forest Red Gum, and Brush Box communities. This area had a heavy infestation of Eastern Cassia and broadleaf Paspalum, both of which were preventing any natural regeneration under the Forest Red Gum canopy.

Our group spent approx 1200hours there from 2000 to2004, with follow up control being done by Sawtell Bushcare Group lead by Charlie England.

Eastern Cassia was controlled using cut and paint method and the Bushcare group followed up by hand weeding seedling regrowth.

Broad-leaved Paspalum was sprayed with glyphosate during winter before seed set in summer. Spraying was done carefully to avoid natives being killed, in particular native grasses. Any Paspalum that could not be sprayed without off target damage was left for the Bushcare Group to deal with They used a combination of spot spraying, wick wiping and hand removal.

Wick-wiping the Broad-leaved Paspalum with a hand held wick wiper was particularly successful. Many groundcovers and native grasses were growing amongst the Paspalum but were not as tall making control with a wick-wiper effective and leaving natives to quickly colonise the area.

Follow up with these 3 techniques on a regular (monthly) basis proved to be a great success in allowing natural regeneration of natives to occur.

Conclusion

Another reality for a contract bush regenerator is that work tends to be in very degraded sites with massive weed infestations. While intact high conservation sites get little or no attention. Even though on close inspection these areas have sleeper weeds present. These weeds over time will only become more prevalent making an impact on the native species present. Until they become an expensive problem to solve they tend to go unnoticed.

Over the last 10 years I have worked in many areas that are now no longer dominated by weeds and that have a good chance of recovery. But these areas require the recognition that their regeneration is slow process that will not be achieved without long term funding and all stakeholders working together. We must concentrate on ecosystems as a whole rather than simply on specific weeds