



WEEDS PATERSON'S CURSE

Glossary

Annual

Completing the full cycle of germination to fruiting to a single year, and then dying.

Basal

Arising from the base.

Fodder

Food substitute for cattle.

Rosette

A tuft of leaves, usually at ground level, resembling the arrangement of petals in a rose.

For More Information

Contact

Eastern Hills Catchment
Management Program
Tel: (08) 9424 2222

Shire of Mundaring
Bushcare Co-ordinator
Tel: (08) 9290 6685

Shire of Kalamunda
Bushcare Co-ordinator
Tel: (08) 9257 9936

Echium plantagineum

Introduction

Paterson's Curse was introduced as a garden plant and considered a useful fodder species in times of drought, hence the common name, "Salvation Jane".

It grows very quickly and provides competition to recognised pasture species in high rainfall areas.

It is widespread on agricultural land, roadsides and vacant land, especially prevalent in high rainfall areas of the Southwest wheat belt.

It is also toxic to livestock in large quantities and the pollen and bristles may cause an allergic reaction in humans.

Origin

Mediterranean and Western Europe. Introduced to Australia in 1850's.

Status

Paterson's Curse is a declared agricultural weed by the Agricultural Protection Board in Western Australia. Priority weed species for the Shire of Kalamunda and the Shire of Mundaring.

Life form

Annual (sometimes biannual) shrub/bush.

Description

An erect, coarse; bristly; branched herb with numerous

flowering stems arising from a basal rosette; up to 110 cm tall.

Leaves: Oblong; the basal leaves are up to 20 cm long but those up the stem are smaller.

Flowers/Seedheads: Blue-purple (or rarely white/pink); broadly funnel-shaped; 5 petals.

Reproduction & Dispersal

Reproduces by seed alone. The plant is a prolific seeder, with more than 5,000 seeds per plant. Seeds can remain dormant for up to 6 years. The seeds are spread by water, animal movement, machinery and also by airborne seed dispersal.

Growing Habit

Able to grow to the exclusion of all else.

Distribution

Shark Bay - Nullabor and the entire southwest. Dense populations exist in Nortampton and in the Avon/Swan Valley regions.

Flowering Season

Late winter - spring.

Effect on Ecosystem

It is a threat to understorey species of many bushland reserves and displaces everlasting daisies and other native annuals.

Control

Manual Removal

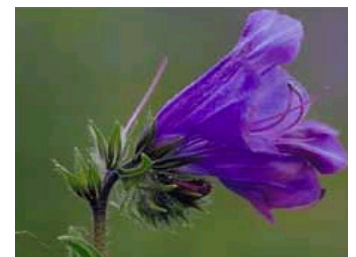
Do not slash or mow. Isolated plants can be removed manually and burnt if flowering or seeding. Dig out small infestations, ensuring removal of the tap root.

It is essential to prevent new seed formation. Graze heavily over spring (but not winter) to reduce seed production. Shear sheep and allow seven days before introducing them to clean areas. The supply of dormant seeds is therefore diminished. Seeds spread can be minimised by cutting away and safely disposing of mature stems. For mature plants, a combination of mechanical and chemical controls is most effective.

Chemical Treatment

Glyphosate and metsulfuron provide good control of existing plants. Use herbicides on existing plants. Crown Borer is a biological control agent.

Please see 'Herbicides and Pesticides' factsheet for more information about spraying chemicals.



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