



Inverell Shire Council

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL UNIT

Please address all correspondence to the General Manager, Inverell Shire Council,
144 Otho Street, Inverell, NSW 2360 – Telephone 02 6728 8288 Fax 02 6728 8277
Email council@inverell.nsw.gov.au website www.inverell.nsw.gov.au

African Boxthorn



One of the reasons African boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*) is so widely distributed since its introduction into Australia is because it was originally promoted and grown as a hedge plant.

A hardy plant, fast-growing, and covered in sharp thorns, African boxthorn made a very effective boundary "fence" between properties in the early days of rural settlement. Its popularity as a garden plant is another reason why we usually find boxthorn around towns and homesteads.

African boxthorn produces small, orange-red berries. Birds are very efficient at spreading the seeds over large areas, and usually under trees. The resultant seedling growth eventually becomes dense enough to take over the entire shaded area [*as in photo, left*],

denying shade to livestock. It's also a perfect harbour for rabbits, foxes, feral cats and pigs.

EFFECT ON ANIMALS

The problem with African boxthorn is its invasiveness. It takes over shaded areas first, and keeps spreading at an ever increasing rate as plant numbers multiply. Unless controlled, African boxthorn seriously impacts on the land's stock-carrying capacity. And, the plants' sharp thorns are a threat to the eyes of grazing animals, especially during dry times when the animals are chasing the last bits of feed under a plant.

IDENTIFICATION

Flowers are a creamy colour about 10mm in diameter. Berries are about the size of "table peas". The plant doesn't usually start to produce fruit until two years old. Every limb is covered with sharp, strong spines growing up to about 75mm long (see photo, right). Plants grow to around 3-4m high.



MORE INFORMATION:

Noxious Plants of Australia, by Parsons & Cuthbertson. Inkata Press. (PTO)

MORE INFORMATION? PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL WEEDS OFFICER:

Les Tanner 02 6728 8284 - mobile 0427 241 806

Phil Sutton 02 6728 8244 - 0418 446 068

OR check out Council's website on www.inverell.nsw.gov.au, Environmental Services section

AFRICAN BOXTHORN (CONT)

CC4(A) MANAGEMENT PLAN - Legal requirements within the Shire of Inverell

The growth and spread of the plant must be controlled by conducting an on-going and effective treatment program to reduce plant numbers and to minimise the plant's negative impact on the land. Boundaries and waterways must be kept free of the plant to prevent spread from the property. All reasonable measures are to be taken to ensure vehicles, machinery and livestock moved off the property are free of the plant.

CONTROL METHODS

Mechanical removal and stacking of plants, using the likes of a tractor and blade, is often a desirable and certainly an immediate way of cleaning up unsightly boxthorn infestations. (**Note 1** plants are easier to remove when ground is moist and **Note 2** always push the plants into heaps away from desirable trees for subsequent burning - subject to fire restrictions of course - to avoid damaging the trees.) There will be regrowth from where the plants have been removed from the ground - continue to remove or chemically treat new growth until plants eventually give up.

Chemical Options: There are a variety of herbicides available. It's important that treatment is carried out only when plants are actively growing. Aug/Sep are usually the best months in north west New South Wales - as long as the plants are NOT moisture-stressed. Complete coverage is essential for foliar spray treatments.

According to NSW Dept of Primary Industries' excellent booklet *"Noxious and Environmental Weed Control Handbook 3rd Edition"*, treatments for African boxthorn include:

Chemical options	Rate: Spot/Boom	Comments
Triclopyr 300 g/L + picloram 100 g/L eg Grazon DS®	500 ml per 100 L of water	Apply when bushes have good leaf cover, growth and no leaf fall
Triclopyr 240 g/L + picloram 120 g/L Access®	1.0 L per 60 L of diesel	Apply as basal bark up to 5cm basal diameter. Cut stump application for over 5 cm diameter
2,4-D 75 g/L + picloram 300 g/L eg Tordon 75D®	1.3 L per 100 L of water	Small bushes only. Spray soil to drip line. Thorough coverage is essential
Glyphosate 360 g/L Various trade names eg Roundup Biactive®	0.7-1.0 L per 100 L of water	Low rate on young bushes, high rate on mature bushes [Thorough coverage is essential - also essential to NOT make the spray any stronger than label recommendation because the plant will defoliate and shut down before the chemical enters the root system]
Glyphosate 360 g/L Various trade names eg Roundup Biactive®	1 part glyphosate to 1.5 parts of water	Drill/axe or stem injection. See Permit PER9158
Triclopyr 600 g/L eg Garlon 600®	1.0L per 30L of diesel	Cut stump/basal bark application
Tebuthiuron 200 g/kg eg Graslan®	2 g per square metre	Estimate the area within 30 cm beyond the drip line of the target plant - calculate the amount of herbicide required to cover the area. Do not apply near desirable trees.
Hexazinone Velpar L®	Undiluted (1-4 ml per spot)	Bushes up to 3m tall. 1 spot per metre of height. Do not apply near desirable trees.
Picloram 20 g/kg eg Tordon® Granules	34-45 g per square metre	Apply only when good rainfall is expected to wash herbicide into root zone
Picloram 450 g/kg eg Vigilant®	Undiluted	Cut stump/stem injection application. Apply a 3-5mm layer of gel for stems less than 20 mm. Apply 5 mm layer on stems above 20 mm (see label).

IMPORTANT: USE OF PESTICIDES - ALWAYS READ THE LABEL

Pesticides must only be used for the purpose for which they are registered and must not be used in any other situation or in any manner contrary to the directions on the label. Never use a herbicide in any way contrary to the label recommendations. **Be also aware of stock withholding periods where applicable.**

DISCLAIMER: The information contained herein is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users 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 of Inverell Shire Council or the user's independent adviser.

(LRT 19/03/10)