

WEEDS IN NON-CROP AND AQUATIC SITUATIONS IN TASMANIA

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Weed control in non-crop situations is practised for two reasons; either because the plants to be controlled are themselves undesirable in the area concerned, or because it is feared that species commonly of economic significance may spread on to or re-infest agricultural land. These reasons apply separately or jointly in a number of Tasmanian situations.

SIGNIFICANCE OF WEEDS AND PRESENT PRACTICE OF WEED CONTROL

Weeds may be of importance in sports grounds, parks and recreation areas because they interfere with the particular sport played, they compete with ornamental or native species, are aesthetically undesirable, or because of their prickly or other unpleasant characteristics.

Mechanical removal and a variety of selective herbicides are used to control weeds in such situations.

Vegetation of any type causes problems when it is growing on railway tracks, open roadside drains, footpaths, industrial sites, and similar areas. Total vegetation control is practised using hand tools and a range of herbicides or herbicide mixtures, comprising contact desiccants, leaf absorbed and translocated chemicals, or herbicides of the residual and root absorbed type.

On many non-agricultural areas the principal concern is usually the prevention of spread of noxious weeds of economic significance on to agricultural land. On roadsides, both reasons mentioned in the first paragraph frequently apply - the prevention of spread of noxious weeds and the elimination of tall growing species which obscure visibility or which carry fire.

In these situations mechanical methods of control are employed as well as spraying with selective and non-selective herbicides using spot treatment for the latter. Because of the various reasons for weed control there is frequently a conflict of interest regarding the species considered desirable for roadsides and similar situations, and some attention is being directed towards the establishment and maintenance of planned ecological associations which would be more suitable than the vegetation which occurs spontaneously. Herbicides may play some part in this.

AQUATIC WEEDS - SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTROL

Interest in aquatic weeds and their control is intensifying as a result of the increase of invasion of drainage and irrigation channels and farm dams by Typha and other aquatic species. This is probably due to the increase of plant nutrients in run off water and the increased number of suitable habitats.

In these situations mechanical removal and spraying with 2,2,D.P.A. paraquat, amitrole and bromacil is used to control aquatic weeds. Where the water can be drained away, substituted urea or triazine herbicides are applied to the bed.

EFFECTIVENESS OF RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND LEGISLATION

Little research on weed control has been carried out specifically on non-crop or aquatic situations, but legislative powers supported by extension work have been used to ensure effective control of the 'dangerous weeds' which are scheduled for eradication within the State or areas of the State.

Legislation and extension are also used to encourage landholders and others to control other noxious weeds on waste areas but this meets with varying success.