

Weed Wattles

Acacia Species

Not to be confused with our own Golden Wreath Wattle (*Acacia Saligna*), Eastern States Wattles have become problematic in the South West due to their previous popularity as ornamental trees & as soil stabilisers. These include:

- Sydney Golden Wattle (*A. longifolia*)
- Flinders Range Wattle (*A. iteaphylla*)
- Cootamundra Wattle (*A. baileyana*)
- Silver Wattle (*A. dealbata*)
- Queensland Silver Wattle (*A. podalyriifolia*)
- Golden Wattle (*A. pycnantha*)



The Problem / Impact

Weed Wattles are not a problem in their own natural geographic locations where local seed-eating insects keep them in check. But this natural control does not occur in Western Australia where these wattles reproduce prolifically by seed.

The Impact of Weed Wattles:

INCREASED BUSH FIRE THREAT: Wattles are nitrogen fixers. When they grow in an area that has been disturbed the combination of disturbed soil and extra nitrogen encourages exotic grasses to invade. As the grasses dry out in summer, they increase the risk of bushfire. Fire stimulates more wattle seeds to germinate and a destructive cycle is set in motion.

OUT COMPETE NATIVE SPECIES: under optimum conditions can form dense, almost impenetrable thickets of trees effectively wiping out all other native plants and habitat for native animals.



Growth Habit & Biological Weak Link

Perennial, trees or spreading shrubs up to 8 m high (variety dependent). The main flowering period is June to October. Seedlings germinate in winter producing acacia type juvenile leaves for the first season or two.

The juveniles quickly grow to maturity and become prolific producers of pods and seeds in 2-3 years. Thickets are often formed and few species grow in the understorey.

A weed wattle's biological weak link is prior to flowering (mature plants) & at seedling stage. Trees are most effectively controlled using herbicides between March and August. It is important that felled trees and branches are removed as they can reproduce vegetatively by developing adventurous roots where the plant meets the soil.





Management & Control Options

Management calendar

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Search												
Germination												
Actively growing: when moisture available												
Flowering												
Fruiting: pod formation												
Treatment: while actively growing												
Manual removal												

SEEDLINGS:

- Wattles are best controlled as seedlings when they are easy to lever and hand-pull or over-spray with a 10% solution glyphosate.
- As seed may remain dormant for more than 10 years, annual follow up control of newly emerged seedlings is essential.

MATURE PLANTS:

- Pruning the flowers before they set seed is not a practical option once these wattles reach a certain size. The only sure way to prevent seed spreading is to fell the tree and then painting the freshly cut stump with a solution of 50% glyphosate to prevent suckering and regrowth of the plant.
- Alternatively, trees can be poisoned and killed without felling by injecting them with a 50% glyphosate solution, or by painting the bark around the base of the tree with a 250 ml mix of Access® in 15 L of diesel.



Rehabilitation & Prevention

You can help by replacing potential weed wattles growing on your property with native trees or with other species that have less potential to become weeds in native bushland. Areas that have been cleared of weed wattles need to be revegetated as soon as practicably possible to out compete any germinating seeds that may be left behind. Try planting our own native wattle instead - Golden Wreath Wattle (*Acacia Saligna*).



References & Further Information

Sources of Information for this flier:

- HerbiGuide www.herbiguide.com.au - Detailed information about weed species and control methods.
- Fact Sheet - Weed Wattles, The City of Bunbury
- DPIRD Website: <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/declared-plants/acacia-declared-pest>

Further Reading:

- Moore, J & Wheeler, J (2019) Southern Weeds and their control. Department of Agriculture and Food WA.

Lower Blackwood LCDC
403 Kudardup Road, Kudardup WA 6288
PO Box 42, Karridale WA6288
T: 9758 4021 | E:
info@lowerblackwood.com.au
www.lowerblackwood.com.au



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