



TIWI ISLANDS WEED MANAGEMENT 2017-18

Outcome: Prevention of weed spread across the Tiwi Islands

Objectives:

- ☆ Eradicate all weeds of national significance/AQIS alert
- ☆ Eradicate small outlying infestations of grassy weeds
- ☆ Contain large infestations of grassy weeds
- ☆ Continue to manage *Acacia mangium* wildings
- ☆ Contain other outbreaks of woody weeds

Treatment Priorities:

The priority treatment of weeds is determined by the risk of weed spread and the potential for damage to primary production and/or the environment. Risk of spread is a function of the type of weed and its location.

Grassy weeds currently present the highest risk for weed spread and potential environmental damage across the Tiwi Islands. Grassy weeds of particular concern are mission grass (*Cenchrus polystachios*, previously known as *Pennisetum polystachion*), guinea grass (*Panicum maximum* syn. *Urochloa maxima*) and gamba grass (*Andropogon gayanus*). For many years these grasses were confined to communities, outstations and camping areas. In more recent years, increased development and traffic across the Islands has led to increased spread of mission grass outside communities, along roadsides and within plantations. Gamba grass has been eradicated from the Tiwi Islands, but monitoring needs to occur to prevent new outbreaks.

Weeds of National Significance and AQIS alert are weeds that could have a significant impact on primary production and/or the environment. Weeds of particular concern for the Tiwi Islands are mimosa (*Mimosa pigra*), fringed spider plant (*Cleome rutidosperma*), lantana (*Lantana camara*), rubber vine (*Cryptostegia grandiflora*) and bellyache bush (*Jatropha gossypifolia*). Apart from one outbreak of mimosa at Cape Gambier, one isolated outbreak of lantana near Cape Gambier, *Acacia mangium* wildings and isolated outbreaks of fringed spider plant, these weeds are mostly confined in and around communities. Isolated outbreaks of Rangoon creeper (*Quisqualis indica*) are also increasing across both islands.

**Tiwi Land Rangers are available to provide assistance with weed identification.
Call Willie on 0488 949809 if you would like some help.**

Remember: IF IN DOUBT – PULL IT OUT!

Weed management priorities for the 2017-18 season on the Tiwi Islands:

1. Contain and progressively eradicate fringed spider plant
2. Progressively eradicate the <i>Mimosa pigra</i> outbreak at Cape Gambier
3. Contain and progressively eradicate the <i>Lantana camara</i> outbreak behind Punarli Beach
4. Continue monitoring and eradication of all occurrences of gamba grass
5. Continue to manage <i>Acacia mangium</i> wildings
6. Treat all occurrences of rubber vine, bellyache bush and Rangoon creeper
7. Eradicate all outlying occurrences of mission grass (those plants outside of communities, and new plantation outbreaks)
8. Contain large, existing outbreaks of mission grass and guinea grass
9. Monitor implementation of quarantine procedures for the Tiwi Islands and organisations operating on the Tiwi Islands

Concurrent with these activities is be the implementation of hygiene and quarantine procedures

Recording:

Please record:

- new weed sightings
- all sightings of grassy weeds outside community/forestry areas; particularly mission grass, gamba grass and guinea grass

Recorded information should include:

- Location description (eg. Kilu-impini bore; Pickertaramoor airstrip etc.)
- GPS reference
- Date
- Weed – common name will do or ‘unidentified grass’
- Estimate of weed density
- Approximate area infested
- If treated; treatment method (eg. pulled, sprayed, none)

At the end of the weed season, please file all weed records in a safe location

Areas of responsibility 2017-18

ORGANISATION	AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY	COMMENTS
Tiwi Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fringed spider plant in forestry areas • <i>A. mangium</i> wildings • Rolla Plains • Plantation areas including internal & access roads • Yapilika forestry centre • Roadside bores • Shark Bay and Northern Beaches Roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With Ranger assistance
Matilda Zircon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andranangoo camp & mining area • Both Lethbridge camps & mining areas • Minesite haul roads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under contract to Tiwi Rangers
Tiwi College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College lease area • Pickertaramoor creek bank • Rangoon creeper • College firebreaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With ongoing assistance from Rangers
Tiwi Land Rangers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cape Gambier mimosa • Punarli Beach area lantana • Fringed spider plant at Pirlangimpi • All Bathurst Island except Wurrumiyanga (includes Ranku) • All rubber vine and bellyache bush • Gamba grass within communities (if present) • Community & outstation boundaries (includes Karlake, Taracumbi outstation & falls, Pitjamirra, Paru, Takamprimilli, Conder Point, 4-Mile, Port Hurd & Fourcroy) • Community rubbish tips & airstrip boundaries • Mission grass & gamba grass outliers • Main roads co-ordinated with forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main focus on Pirlangimpi to Pickataramoor; and Milikapiti to Paru roads
Tiwi Marine Rangers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cape Gambier mimosa • AFANT campsites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With Land Ranger assistance
Tiwi Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All weeds within community boundaries • Edges of communities 	
Port Melville lessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All weeds within Port Melville lease 	
Point Fawcett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All weeds within Defence lease and along fence lines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under contract to Tiwi Rangers

Weed identification:

Mission grass (*Cenchrus polystachios*)



Young plants often have red stems





Mission grass flower heads can be between 10 and 25cm long.

Gamba grass (*Andropogon gayanus*)



Tussocks can grow to 4m high and up to 70cm in diameter.



Stems are covered in soft velvety hair



Gamba grass leaves are up to 60cm long, have a distinctive white midrib and are covered with soft velvety hairs.



Seeds are on tall stems above the leaves

Guinea grass (*Panicum maximum* syn. *Urochloa maxima*)



Mimosa/giant sensitive plant (*Mimosa pigra*)



Leaves will close up when touched. Found in wet areas and floodplains

Lantana (*Lantana camara*)



Shrub to 5m high and many metres wide, **or** climber to 15m high.

Recognised by colourful flowers.

Some varieties have thorns on young stems.

Leaves give off an unpleasant smell when crushed.

Rubber vine (*Cryptostegia grandiflora*)



Shrub to 3m high if unsupported, **or** woody climber with vine-like stems to over 40m long.

Stems 'whip-like' or branched.

Bark dotted with corky patches.

Roots, stems, leaves and unripe pods have milky latex.

Large seedpods 10–15 cm long.

Bellyache bush (*Jatropha gossypifolia*)



Erect shrub or small tree to 4m high.

Stems hairy, non-woody.

Leaves purple when young but go green when mature.

Leaves have watery sap.

Fruit is an oblong capsule, initially green, ripening to dark brown.

Fringed spider plant (*Cleome rutidosperma*)



Soft-stemmed annual growing to 1m tall.

Stems are angular and each leaf has three leaflets.

The small mauve flowers have four upright petals.

Numerous tiny kidney-shaped brown seeds develop in a narrow capsule.





Rangoon creeper (*Quisqualis indica*)

Large, climbing shrub



Some photos & information taken from Weeds Australia, AQIS, NT Government and Commonwealth Government weed websites.