

Weed Spotters' Network Queensland

Bulletin

November 2015



Dear Weed Spotters,

This is the final Weed Spotters' Network bulletin for 2015. It's been a big year and we have lots to celebrate! Our network now boasts 1100 members across the state and more than 300 of you gave your time to attend a Weed Spotter training session in 2015. Thank you to everyone who has spotted and sent in photographs and specimens of weeds for identification this year. Your hard work has resulted in 65 notifications of new and emerging weed threats across the state, including 29 records of Class 1 declared pest plants. Four of these weeds were recorded in Queensland for the first time in 2015, two of which were also new records for Australia.

As always, our sincere thanks go to the network's 22 dedicated regional coordinators who enthusiastically volunteer their time and knowledge to assist Weed Spotters and the community with education, weed reporting and identification.



Keep an eye on your inbox for the February 2016 bulletin. Until then, enjoy a safe and happy holiday season.

Melinda and the Weed Spotters' Network Queensland

([Sesbania panicea](#) – red Sesbania (Class 1), Photo: Jean Pawek)

Upcoming weed spotter training

Sunshine Coast: Wednesday 18 Nov 2015, 10am–12pm.

Brisbane: Thursday 19 Nov 2015, 10am–12pm.

Please email Melinda.Laidlaw@dsiti.qld.gov.au or phone (07) 3896 9323 if you would like to attend.

Weed Spotter profile: Darren Brooks & Sid Clayton

Darren Brooks and Sid Clayton are Land Protection Officers with Mareeba Shire Council in north Queensland. The weeds they work on grow in a wide range of environments from clay pans in the Western Gulf, to the rainforests of the Wet Tropics. While searching for pond apple in Kuranda last month, Darren encountered some plants resembling prickly Acacias. He collected a specimen. When Darren and Sid keyed it out, they realised they'd found something different and quickly sent it to NAQS and the Queensland Herbarium for identification. They had found the first Australian record of *Mimosa tenuiflora* (see p3), a weedy relative of the Acacias. Thanks to their vigilance, this outbreak has now been controlled.



Class 1 declared plant: *Nassella neesiana* (Chilean needle grass)

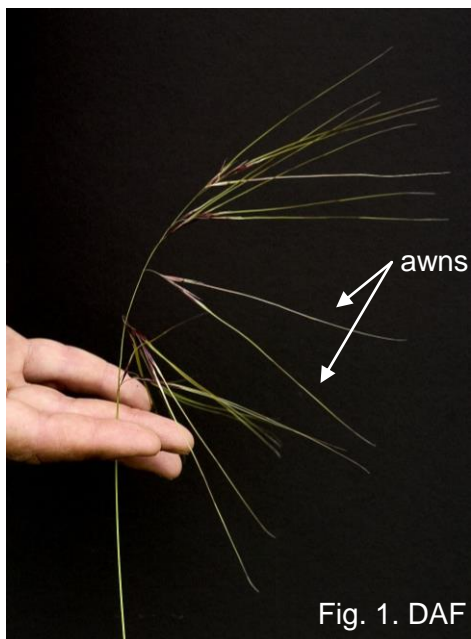


Fig. 1. DAF

Chilean needle grass is so named due to its long, sharply pointed seeds which can cause injury to livestock and native animals. It can threaten biodiversity by replacing native grasslands and grassy woodlands, and by infesting riparian areas. It is a hardy species, able to tolerate drought, flooding and heavy grazing. Chilean needle grass forms dense tussocks and may form pure stands up to 1 m in height.

Chilean needle grass can be very difficult to identify without fertile material present. The leaves are 1–5 mm wide and are strongly ribbed on their upper surface. The edges of the leaves are rough to touch. Flower heads (to 40 cm long, fig. 1) generally appear from November to December but flowering may occur year round under good conditions. Immature flower heads have dark red bracts called glumes (fig. 2) enclosing the seeds and have a 60 mm pale green awn at the end of the seed

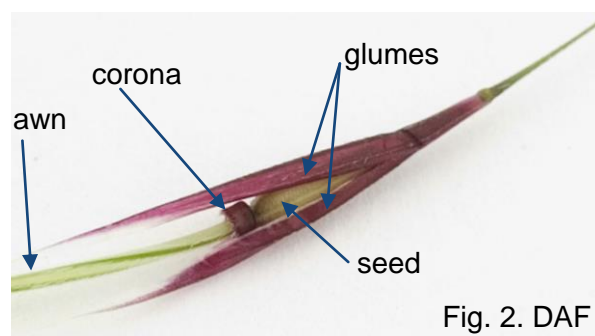


Fig. 2. DAF

(fig. 2). This awn is curved or bent. A raised reddish corona (or crown) is also present between the awn and the seed (fig. 2). As the seeds mature, they become pale brown (8–10 mm long, fig. 2). Read more about Chilean needle grass in the [November 2014 bulletin](#).

Class 1 declared plant: *Mikania micrantha* (Mikania)

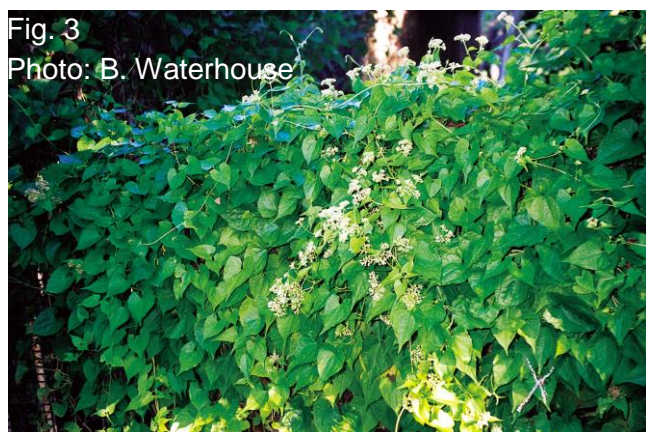


Fig. 3
Photo: B. Waterhouse

Mikania is a multi-stemmed, perennial scrambling vine (fig. 3). Its leaves are opposite, 4–13 cm long and heart-shaped with a long, tapered drip-tip and 3 distinctive veins extending from the base (fig. 4). The petiole (leaf stalk) is 2–8 cm long. Stems are slender (<2 cm diameter), ribbed and covered in fine white hairs.

Flowering occurs between May and October. Each flower head is 4–6 mm long and contains

four individual greenish-white flowers which have a mild, sweet scent (fig. 5). Seeds are small (1.5–2 mm), thin and black with 5-angled sides. Each seed has a tuft (pappus) of 30 or more white bristles 2 mm in length. Up to 40,000 seeds can be produced per plant per year. Read more about *Mikania* in the [November 2013 bulletin](#).



Fig. 4
Photo: DAF

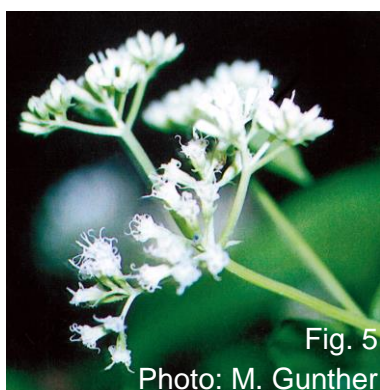


Fig. 5

Photo: M. Gunther

If you think you have seen Chilean needle grass or *Mikania* growing in your region, please contact the Queensland Herbarium on (07) 3896 9323, email a photo to: Queensland.Herbarium@qld.gov.au or contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

A new invasive species for Queensland and Australia: *Mimosa tenuiflora* (syn. *Mimosa hostilis*) (Brazilian jurema)



Fig. 1

Brazilian jurema is a perennial shrub or small tree to 8 m (fig. 1) native to Mexico, South and Central America. It is a member of the Acacia family (Mimosaceae) and may be confused with non-native prickly 'Acacia' species in Queensland. Although not declared under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*, Biosecurity Queensland has recently assessed the species as high risk due to its potential to become an invasive weed in Queensland. Brazilian jurema has also been identified as a biosecurity risk by the [Northern Australian Quarantine Strategy](#) (NAQS) and is a [prohibited import](#) into Australia.

Despite these restrictions, cultivated individuals of Brazilian jurema were reported for the first time in Australia in October at Kuranda, north Queensland. It is uncertain whether seeds were sourced illegally from overseas through the mail before being sold online within Australia. Further individuals of this species are likely to be found growing in Queensland.

Brazilian jurema is capable of forming pure stands in savannas and on rangeland floodplains similar to its close relative, *Mimosa pigra* ([giant sensitive tree – Class 1](#)), damaging grazing land, restricting stock movements, harbouring feral animals and threatening biodiversity. Much of Queensland's tropical savanna habitat could provide suitable habitat for Brazilian jurema.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Brazilian jurema has smooth grey-brown bark with reddish-brown young stems. Branches have large, curved spines (fig. 2). The compound leaves are fern-like to 5 cm in length. Each leaf has 15–33 pairs of leaflets 5–6 mm long (fig. 3). Inflorescences appear in spring to early summer and are spikes of cream coloured flowers with conspicuous stamens (fig. 3). The pods are initially green but mature to be reddish-brown and flattened to 6 cm long. Each pod contains 4–6 flat, oval seeds 3–4 mm in diameter.

Photos: Barbara Waterhouse (NAQS)

If you think you have seen Brazilian jurema growing in your region, please contact the Queensland Herbarium on (07) 3896 9323, email a photo to: Queensland.Herbarium@qld.gov.au or contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

Keep an eye out for these weeds between November and January...

Species	Common name	Watch for in this region	Field attributes to look for
# <i>Acaciella glauca</i> (July 2014 bulletin)	redwood	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary, Cape York, Fitzroy Basin, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Dry Tropics	white ball-shaped flowers, creek lines and dry tropics
# <i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i> (February 2014 bulletin)	alligator weed	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary, Cape York, Fitzroy Basin, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Dry tropics	hollow stems, white flowers, wetlands and creeklines
# <i>Cylindropuntia prolifera</i> (August 2014 bulletin)	jumping or coastal cholla	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, Southern Gulf, Dry Tropics, South West Queensland	spines to 2 cm long
# <i>Cylindropuntia tunicata</i> / # <i>C. rosea</i> (July 2013 bulletin)	chain-link cactus/ Hudsons pear	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, Southern Gulf, Dry Tropics, South West Queensland	long spreading spines
# <i>Eichhornia azurea</i> / <i>E. crassipes</i> (October 2014 bulletin)	water hyacinth	Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	water bodies, floating, purple flowers
<i>Elephantopus mollis</i> (March 2015 bulletin)	tobacco weed	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary	daisy to 1 m tall, flowers white or pink
# <i>Equisetum</i> spp. (July 2013 bulletin)	horsetails	South East Queensland	primitive plant, no flowers, leaves reduced
<i>Heterotheca grandiflora</i> (September 2014 bulletin)	telegraph weed	South East Queensland	daisy to 2 m, flowers yellow
<i>Hymenachne amplexicaulis</i> (June 2013 bulletin)	hymenachne	Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	robust grass to 2.5 m, water bodies & drains
# <i>Limnocharis flava</i> (October 2013 bulletin)	yellow burrhead	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary, Cape York, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Wet Tropics, Dry Tropics	water bodies & margins, yellow flowers & triangular stems
# <i>Mikania micrantha</i> (November 2013 bulletin)	mikania vine	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary, Cape York, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Wet Tropics, Dry Tropics	heart shaped leaf & smothering habit
# <i>Mimosa pigra</i> (August 2013 bulletin)	giant sensitive tree	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary, Cape York, Southern Gulf, Northern Gulf, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Wet Tropics, Dry Tropics	fern leaves, rose-like thorns, pink ball-shaped flowers

Species (cont.)	Common name	Watch for in this region	Field attributes to look for
# Neptunia oleracea/N.plena (June 2013 bulletin)	water mimosa	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary, Cape York, Fitzroy Basin, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Wet Tropics, Dry Tropics	floating & taking over a water body, ferny leaf
Pistia stratiotes (November 2014 bulletin)	water lettuce	Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	water bodies, resembles a small open lettuce
Pueraria montana var. lobata (February 2015 bulletin)	kudzu	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary	vine with fragrant purple-pink flowers
Salvinia molesta (November 2013 bulletin)	salvinia	Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	water bodies, leaves with water repellent hairs
Senecio madagascariensis (August 2014 bulletin)	fireweed	Wet Tropics	daisy to 60 cm, flowers yellow
# Senegalia insuavis (April 2014 bulletin)	pennata wattle or cha-om	Cape York, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Wet Tropics, South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary	pink ball-shaped flowers, prickles along stems
# Senegalia rugata (April 2015 bulletin)	soap pod	Cape York, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Wet Tropics	pink ball-shaped flowers, prickles along stems
Solanum viarum (April 2013 bulletin)	tropical soda apple	Burnett/Mary, Fitzroy Basin, Northern Gulf, Mackay Whitsunday, Dry Tropics	variegated cherry tomato, thorny leaves, look in sale yards, abattoirs
# Ulex europaeus (October 2013 bulletin)	gorse	Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine	fragrant yellow flowers, thorny leaves
# Vachellia karroo (May 2013 bulletin)	karroo thorn	South East Queensland, Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	long, white, paired thorns
# Vachellia xanthophloea (September 2013 bulletin)	yellow fever tree	South East Queensland, Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, Southern Gulf, Northern Gulf	long, white, paired thorns

Class 1 declared plant

Notifications – October 2015

Finding and reporting emerging weeds which could cause serious environmental, social and economic impacts across Queensland is a critical role of our network. **Putting them on the map** also means we can track their spread and the effectiveness of control measures across the landscape and through time.

If you see a plant in your region which raises your suspicions, please [collect it](#) and bring it to the attention of your regional coordinator and/or the Queensland Herbarium. You can find a full list of the declared plants of Queensland on the [Biosecurity Queensland website](#). (**WONS**=Weed of National Significance; **NAQS**=Northern Australian Quarantine Survey; **NEAL**=National Environmental Alert List)

1. **Class 1/WONS** [Asparagus asparagoides](#) (L.) Druce (bridal creeper) from Dalveen. Craig Magnussen, Southern Downs Regional Council.
2. **Class 1 weed/NEAL** [Gymnocoronis spilanthoides](#) (D.Don ex Hook. & Arn.) DC. (Senegal tea) from Brookfield, Brisbane. Nick Swanson, Brisbane City Council.
3. **Class 1 weed** [Hygrophila costata](#) Nees (Hygrophila/Glush weed) from Earlville, Cairns. Michael Graham, Biosecurity Queensland.
4. **Class 2 weed/WONS** [Hymenachne amplexicaulis](#) (Rudge) Nees (olive Hymenachne) from Redland Bay. Jedd Thomas and Maree Manby, Redland City Council.
5. **Class 1 weed/NAQS** [Miconia sp.](#), likely *Miconia racemosa* (Aubl.) DC. (Miconia) from Kuranda. Steven Brewer, Biosecurity Queensland.
6. **NAQS** *Mimosa tenuiflora* (Willd.) Poir. (Brazilian jurema) from Kuranda. Darren Brooks and Sid Clayton, Mareeba Shire Council.
7. **Class 2 weed/WONS** [Opuntia aurantiaca](#) Lindl. (tiger pear) from Augathella. Daniel McCudden, Biosecurity Queensland.
8. **Class 2 weed/WONS** [Opuntia monacantha](#) (Willd.) Haw. (drooping tree pear) from Black Mountain, Noosa. Phil Herrington, Noosa Shire Council.



[Miconia racemosa](#) (Miconia)
Class 1

Photo: Biosecurity Queensland

Your regional coordinators

Regional coordinators are your local weed experts and are able to answer your questions about training, specimen preparation and weed identification in your area. Give them a call!

Brisbane and WSNQ coordinator

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Weed Spotters' Network Queensland is a joint project between the Queensland Herbarium, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and local governments with funding support from the Land Protection Fund