

# Weed Spotters' Network Queensland

Bulletin  
April 2015



## Pathways of spread for aquatic weeds

Outbreaks of aquatic weeds can threaten our rivers, creeks, lakes and billabongs by shading and outcompeting our local native plant species. Aquatic weeds reduce water quality for native fauna by reducing dissolved oxygen levels, reducing water temperatures and preventing light penetration. Weeds also restrict our recreational use of waterways and stock access to water.

Aquatic weeds can easily and unintentionally be moved between water bodies by flood events, vehicles, boats, fishing equipment or by wildlife. Unfortunately, some introductions are deliberate. Aquatic weeds are regularly cultivated in our waterways as food plants, as ponded pasture species for grazing or are grown for sale in the ornamental and aquarium trades. Use the following tips to help reduce the impact of aquatic weeds on our wetlands and waterways:

- Never grow non-native aquatic plants in dams, ponds or waterways. Consult the [Grow me instead](#) website for native alternatives.
- Never buy, swap or trade aquatic weeds, especially online.
- Never dump aquarium plants, water or other contents down drains or into waterways.
- Inspect your fishing gear, boat, car and trailer for seeds and plant fragments before leaving freshwater waterways.
- Report any unusual plants growing in your local waterways.

## Upcoming Weed Spotter training

**Mackay**, 10 am–12 pm Wednesday 6 May 2015.

**Gladstone**, 10 am–12 pm Wednesday 27 May 2015.

**Longreach**, 10 am–12 pm Tuesday 23 June 2015.

Please email [Melinda.Laidlaw@dsitia.qld.gov.au](mailto:Melinda.Laidlaw@dsitia.qld.gov.au) or phone (07) 3896 9323 if you would like to attend.

## Regional coordinator profile: Bernie Claussen

Bernie Claussen is a field officer with the Central Highlands Regional Resources Use Planning Cooperative (CHRRUP) in Emerald. Bernie grew up in Central Queensland on a cattle and mixed cropping property in the Dee River Valley. She has worked in several north Queensland communities and on Christmas Island in the field of environmental education. This diverse background along with her Natural Resource Management qualifications has given her broad experience in farming, grazing, weed and land management. If you need advice on weeds in the Emerald region, contact Bernie at: [Bernie@chrrup.org.au](mailto:Bernie@chrrup.org.au)



## Class 1 declared plants: *Senegalia insuavis* (cha-om or pennata wattle)

Pennata wattle is a fast-growing shrub or scrambling vine which can reach a height of 5 m (fig. 1). It has finely bipinnate leaves with small leaflets (fig. 2) and scattered prickles along its branchlets and along the stem. The petiole (leaf stalk) has a large, visible gland at its base. The leaves, stems and flowers have a very strong, unpleasant smell. The flowers are cream to yellow and the seed pods are flattened. Pennata wattle is often cultivated in gardens. Read more about cha-om in the [April 2014 bulletin](#).



Fig. 1. Photo: DAF



Fig. 2. Photo: DAF

## Emerging pest plants: *Solanum viarum* (tropical soda apple)

Tropical soda apple is a spiny shrub to 2 m tall with an upright habit and multiple branches (fig. 3). The leaves (10–20 cm long and 6–15 cm wide) are covered both in dense short hairs and long spines up to 1.2 cm in length. The leaves are unpalatable to livestock. Flowering usually begins in autumn although can occur year round. Each flower has five petals which curve backwards and white or cream coloured stamens. Fruits generally appear in winter and are round (1–3 cm diameter), with mottled light and dark green skin (like a watermelon) when immature and with smooth, leathery, yellow skin when mature (fig. 4). The inside of the fruit is pale green and scented and has 180–420 seeds. The fruits are readily eaten by cattle, which along with birds, pigs and deer are very effective dispersal agents.



Figs. 3 and 4 (inset). Photo: DAF

Seeds can also be spread via the movement of contaminated manures, hay, water, equipment and vehicles. Tropical soda apple is an emerging threat but is not currently a declared pest plant under Queensland legislation. Read more about tropical soda apple in the [April 2013 bulletin](#).

If you think you have seen cha-om or tropical soda apple growing in your region, please contact the Queensland Herbarium on (07) 3896 9323, email a photo to: [Queensland.Herbarium@dsitia.qld.gov.au](mailto:Queensland.Herbarium@dsitia.qld.gov.au) or contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

## Class 1 declared plants: *Senegalia rugata* (syn. *Acacia concinna* - soap pod)



Fig. 1.

Soap pod is a widely distributed relative of the Acacias found throughout south-east Asia. It is found in primary and secondary rainforests, often in disturbed habitats such as river banks, forest margins and in forest gaps. In India, it is a common species on plains. Soap pod is used throughout south-east Asia as a medicinal plant with various uses including as a cleanser, hence its common name, as the seeds contain saponins, a foam forming chemical compound.

Soap pod is a class 1 declared pest plant in Queensland. It is known as an invasive species in New Caledonia, La Réunion and in Mauritius where it invades dry lowland forests and riverine systems. Naturalised specimens of soap pod were recorded in north Queensland from near Mossman in 1972 and 1974. The most recent record of this species is of cultivated individuals in Babinda recorded in 2013.



Fig. 2

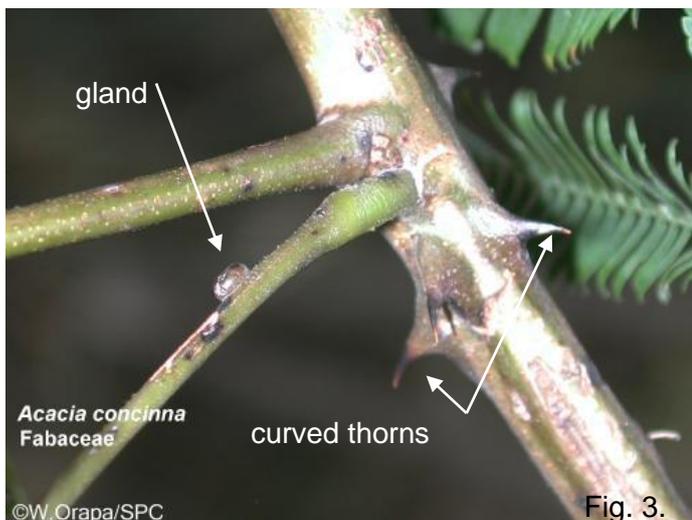


Fig. 3.

Soap pod can grow variously as an erect, spreading or scrambling shrub (fig. 1) or shrubby vine growing up to 18 or even 30 m in length. It usually produces several main stems each up to 10 cm in diameter. The branches have brown stripes and the stems are covered in short, curved thorns (fig. 3). The leaves are ferny in appearance as they are bi-pinnate with many fine, membranous leaflets (fig. 2). Each leaflet is 3–10 mm long and pointed. The leaf stalk (petiole) and rachis have circular to elliptical glands (fig. 3). The rachis is also thorny. Inflorescences are a

cluster of 2–3 rounded flower heads held on stalks 1–2.5 mm long. The pink ball-shaped flower heads are 7–12 mm in diameter (fig. 2). Pods are oblong in shape, 4.5–15 cm x 1.5–2 cm, often with constrictions between the 6–10 seeds (fig. 4). (Photos by Warea Orapa, PNG NAQIA)



Fig. 4.

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

## Keep an eye out for these weeds in March...

Species	Common name	Watch for in this region	Field attributes to look for
# <a href="#"><i>Acaciella glauca</i></a> (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
# <a href="#"><i>Andropogon gyanus</i></a> (March 2014 bulletin)	gamba grass	Southern Gulf, Northern Gulf	large, tufted grass
# <a href="#"><i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera</i> subsp. <i>rotundata</i></a> (May 2014 bulletin)	Bitou bush	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary,	Yellow-flowered shrub, coastal areas
# <a href="#"><i>Cylindropuntia prolifera</i></a> (August 2014 bulletin)	coastal cholla	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, Southern Gulf, Dry tropics, South West Queensland	spines to 2 cm long
# <a href="#"><i>Cylindropuntia tunicata</i></a> / # <a href="#"><i>C. rosea</i></a> (July 2013 bulletin)	chain-link cactus/ Hudsons pear	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, Southern Gulf, Dry Tropics, South West Queensland	long spreading spines
# <a href="#"><i>Eichhornia azurea</i></a> / <a href="#"><i>E. crassipes</i></a> (October 2014 bulletin)	water hyacinth	Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	water bodies, floating, purple flowers
<a href="#"><i>Elephantopus mollis</i></a> (March 2015 bulletin)	tobacco weed	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary	daisy to 1 m tall, flowers white or pink
# <a href="#"><i>Equisetum</i> spp.</a> (July 2013 bulletin)	horsetails	South East Queensland	primitive plant, no flowers, leaves reduced
<a href="#"><i>Heterotheca grandiflora</i></a> (September 2014 bulletin)	telegraph weed	South East Queensland	daisy to 2 m, flowers yellow
<a href="#"><i>Hymenachne amplexicaulis</i></a> (June 2013 bulletin)	hymenachne	Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	robust grass to 2.5 m, water bodies & drains
# <a href="#"><i>Limnocharis flava</i></a> (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
# <a href="#"><i>Mikania micrantha</i></a> (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
# <a href="#"><i>Neptunia oleracea</i>/<i>N. plena</i></a> (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

Species (cont.)	Common name	Watch for in this region	Field attributes to look for
# <a href="#"><i>Opuntia dejecta</i></a>	prickly pear	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, South West Queensland, Southern Gulf	spiny succulent shrub
# <a href="#"><i>Opuntia elata</i></a> (June 2014 bulletin)	prickly pear	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, South West Queensland, Southern Gulf	spiny succulent shrub
# <a href="#"><i>Opuntia elatior</i></a> (June 2014 bulletin)	prickly pear	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, South West Queensland, Southern Gulf	spiny succulent shrub
# <a href="#"><i>Opuntia leucotricha</i></a> (June 2014 bulletin)	prickly pear	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, South West Queensland, Southern Gulf	spiny succulent shrub
# <a href="#"><i>Opuntia microdasys</i></a> (June 2014 bulletin)	bunny ears	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, South West Queensland, Southern Gulf	succulent shrub, clustered yellow spines
# <a href="#"><i>Opuntia sulphurea</i></a> (June 2014 bulletin)	prickly pear	Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, South West Queensland, Southern Gulf	spiny succulent shrub
<a href="#"><i>Pistia stratiotes</i></a> (November 2014 bulletin)	water lettuce	Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	water bodies, resembles a small open lettuce
# <a href="#"><i>Pithecellobium dulce</i></a> (November 2014 bulletin)	Madras thorn	Cape York, Fitzroy Basin, Southern Gulf, Northern Gulf, Dry tropics	pair of spines at leaf base, small white flowers, segmented curved pods
<a href="#"><i>Pueraria montana var. lobata</i></a> (February 2015 bulletin)	kudzu	South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary	vine with fragrant purple-pink flowers
# <a href="#"><i>Salix alba</i></a> (April 2014 bulletin)	white willow	Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South East Queensland, Burnett/Mary	yellow/orange foliage in autumn
# <a href="#"><i>Salix cinerea</i></a> (April 2014 bulletin)	grey willow	Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine	yellow/orange foliage in autumn
# <a href="#"><i>Salix nigra</i></a> (April 2014 bulletin)	black willow	Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South East Queensland	yellow/orange foliage in autumn
<a href="#"><i>Salvinia molesta</i></a> (November 2013 bulletin)	salvinia	Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	water bodies, leaves with water repellent hairs
<a href="#"><i>Senecio madagascariensis</i></a> (August 2014 bulletin)	fireweed	Wet Tropics	daisy to 60 cm, flowers yellow
# <a href="#"><i>Senegalia insuavis</i></a> (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

Species (cont.)	Common name	Watch for in this region	Field attributes to look for
# <i>Senegalia rugata</i> (this issue)	soap pod	Cape York, Mackay Whitsunday, Torres Strait, Wet Tropics	pink ball-shaped flowers, prickles along stems
<a href="#"><i>Solanum viarum</i></a> (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
# <i>Ulex europaeus</i> (October 2013 bulletin)	gorse	Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine	yellow flowers, thorny leaves
# <i>Vachellia karroo</i> (May 2013 bulletin)	karroo thorn	South East Queensland, Fitzroy Basin, Desert Channels, Queensland Murray Darling Region, Condamine, South West Queensland	long, white, paired thorns

# Class 1 declared plant

## Notifications – March 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)

- Class 1 weed** [Gleditsia triacanthos](#) L. (honey locust) from Upper Freestone. Lloyd Hilton, Southern Downs Regional Council.
- Class 2 weed/WONS** [Prosopis velutina](#) Wooton (mesquite) from Mt Tyson. Clynton Spencer, Toowoomba Regional Council.
- Class 2 weed/WONS** [Salvinia molesta](#) D.S.Mitch. (salvinia) from Mt Poverty, Cape York. Jason Carrol, South Cape York Catchments.
- Class 1 weed** [Senegalia insuavis](#) (Lace) Pedley (cha-om/pennata wattle) from Brinsmead, Cairns. Michael Graham, Biosecurity Queensland.
- Class 2 weed** [Sporobolus jacquemontii](#) Kunth (American rat's tail grass) from Speerwah. Lou Wise, Speerwah.

## 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