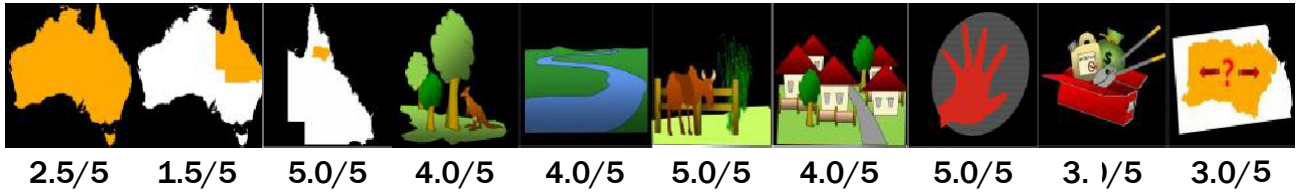


Jatropha spp. (Bellyache bush & Physic nut)



Priority



Details

Description: Squat, thick stemmed shrub 2.4-4m tall. Seedlings single stemmed with deeply divided purple leaves. Mature leaves brighter green with up to 5 lobes with coarse dark brown hairs on the margins. Small red flowers followed by green fleshy pods. *J. curcas* similar plant to *J. Gossypiifolia* with large green leaves with pale veins and less deeply lobed.

Distribution: Bellyache bush (*J. gossypiifolia*) is currently restricted to riparian areas of the Palmer River where it is widespread and abundant. Isolated occurrences of physic nut (*J. curcas*) have been collected near Cooktown and Weipa. Both are expected to be associated with older or abandoned settlements, camps or stock movement.

Impacts: The fruits are poisonous to humans and livestock which when eaten lead to symptoms of gastroenteritis and sometimes death. Bellyache bush has a devastating impact on rangeland river systems and pastures.

Key projects: A coordinated top-of-catchment down management program is continuing on Bellyache bush in the Palmer River district. Neighbouring programs in the Mareeba Shire area have removed Bellyache Bush from 70 kilometres of the upper Walsh and Mitchell River.

Management requirements

Bellyache bush and physic nut will spread along watercourses growing into thick infestations on river flats and the beds of ephemeral creeks and rivers. Introductions of both these plants are usually associated with houses, homesteads and gardens. Seeds are spread by birds, and on machinery and stock.

Prevention

To prevent spread to new locations or introduction from known infestations ensure machinery, vehicles and raw materials are free from soil which may contain seed.

Spell stock in holding yards for 7 days prior to releasing to pasture/rangeland to allow for seed to pass through the gut or fall from hooves and hide. Ensure quarry and raw materials are free of seed.

Belly ache bush is Sometimes confused with castor oil plant which is taller with more (7-9 lobes) which are pointed rather than rounded. Report any suspect plants to Cook Shire Council on 07 4069 5444.

Intensive control

Landholders downstream of the Palmer River infestations should be on the look out for new or established infestations to assist the management response.

Report any suspect plants outside of the Palmer River system to Cook Shire Council on 07 4069 5444.

flower	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
seed	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
herbicide	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
mechanical	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Biology		●			●			○			⊗	
Control		Optimal			Good			Marginal			Not recommended	



J. curcas





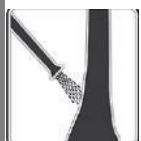

J. gossypifolia

- terrestrial
- herb
- perennial

Category

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

Control

- 
- 
- 
- 

Spread

- 
- 

What is my biosecurity obligation?

Prevention zone

Report any suspected outbreaks or detections to Cook Shire Council on 07 4069 5444.

Ensure any machinery or vehicles moving from the infested areas are free from plant material and soil.

Intensive control zone

Ensure best practice weed hygiene measures are in place to reduce risk of spread to new locations. Maintain weed free areas. Assist in annual survey operations.

For more information on management aims in each zone refer to *Using the pest plan templates*