

THREATS

Boneseed: An environmental weed

Chrysanthemoides monilifera



Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania

DEPARTMENT of TOURISM, PARKS
HERITAGE and the ARTS

What is Boneseed?

Boneseed is an “environmental weed”, a plant which reduces environmental values through its ability to invade bushland and compete with native flora. It is an evergreen shrub, a member of the daisy family, growing to three metres in height and diameter, with bright yellow daisy-shaped flowers. A native of South Africa, it was introduced in the mid 1800’s as a garden plant and has since become a significant threat to forests, bushlands and coastal areas in many parts of Tasmania. The name boneseed comes from its bone-coloured seeds, which are produced singly inside each fruit.

Where does it grow?

Boneseed is widespread due to its adaptable nature. It particularly favours woodlands, open forests, coastal situations and settled areas. The major occurrences of boneseed in Tasmania are in the Tamar Valley, along the Northern Coast, at various locations on the East Coast and in and around Hobart and Launceston. Boneseed also occurs in NSW, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia, where it is a declared Noxious Weed.

Why is it a problem?

Boneseed is a highly adaptable plant which has the ability to establish, and to compete strongly with native species, in both disturbed and undisturbed bush. It can form dense thickets several metres high which exclude most native understorey species. In such situations, native fauna may also be affected by the loss of available habitats and food sources. Boneseed is surprisingly inflammable for an evergreen plant and dense thickets can be a significant fire hazard.

How does it spread?

Boneseed spreads only by seed. A mature plant can set 50,000 seeds in one season. The seeds can lie dormant in the soil for 10-15 years, germinating particularly strongly after soil disturbances and fire. Boneseed is spread by ants, birds and animals feeding on the fruits. Seeds also disperse by rolling or washing down slopes.

However the greatest spread of boneseed may be attributed to human activity, intentionally as a garden plant or sand dune stabiliser, and unintentionally in garden waste or contaminated soil.

What’s being done to remove Boneseed?

The removal of boneseed is a long-term process, requiring management over a number of years to ensure all seed stored in the ground has germinated.

There are a number of methods of control currently in use, including mechanical (hand pulling of smaller plants up to one metre), herbicides (by foliar spray or cutting and painting stumps with herbicide), fire (controlled burning of infested area, followed by spraying of consequent seedling germination), and biological (the black boneseed beetle and the soft shoot tip moth, both native to South Africa).

Biological control is currently being trialed in Tasmania, and is being successfully used in Victoria.

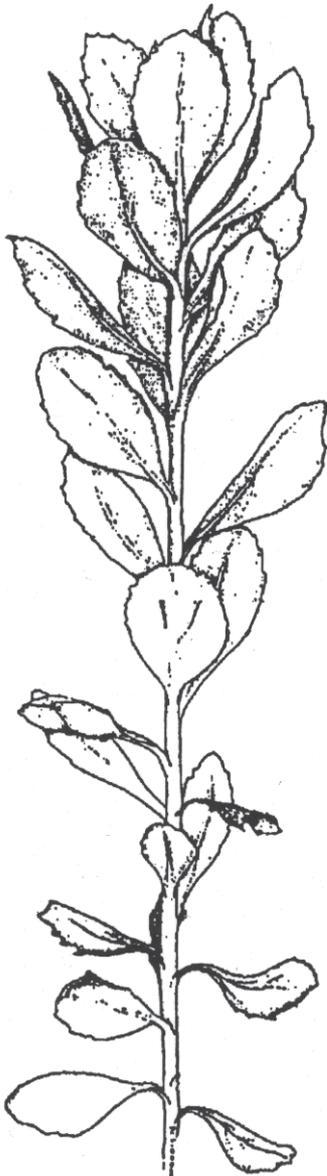


Boneseed flowers, 2.5 cm diameter, 4-8 bright yellow petals clustered at ends of branches. Flowering from mid-spring to early summer.

The most appropriate method for gardens and small infestations is hand pulling of plants up to one metre high. Large plants may be dug up if in the garden or cut near ground level. The stump should immediately be painted with undiluted glyphosate herbicide (e.g. Roundup Biactive©, Weedmaster© or Glyphosate 360©)

Always follow any safety guidelines outlined on the herbicide product and remember, **wear rubber gloves** not leather!

Ongoing management will be required - possibly for years - as new seedlings emerge from the soil seed bank or seed dropped by birds.



Boneseed is an evergreen, perennial shrub, to 3 m in height and diameter with dull green leathery leaves 2-8 cm long.

Berry fruit, 5mm, green and fleshy at first, black when mature. One seed in each berry, triangular hard and bonelike in texture and colour, produced during summer and autumn.



How can you help?

If you have Boneseed in your garden or on your property, contact the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, 1300 368 550 (free call), to discuss the best method of removal and/or long-term control.

Join your local land or coastcare group and help remove boneseed from your area.

Become a member of WildCARE and join other like-minded people to save our bushlands from damaging weed infestations like Boneseed. Contact the WildCARE Tasmania Coordinator, (03) 6233 2185; email: wildcare@dpiwe.tas.gov.au

Membership to WildCARE is also available at all Service Tasmania Centres.

Further information

If you would like more information on Boneseed, its identification, distribution or control, please contact the Flora Protection Officer, Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, (03) 6233 3912.

Contact

Nature Conservation Branch
134 Macquarie Street, Hobart. 7000
Phone: (03) 6233 6556
Fax: (03) 6233 3477

BEWARE...Boneseed's attractive daisy-like flowers belie its invasive nature



FURTHER INFORMATION

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