

MANAGING WEED AND ANIMAL PESTS

What can I do as a landholder?

As an owner of rural land, you need to consider the impact of weed and animal pests on your property and the surrounding landscapes. Unfortunately, pest and animal species do not stop at property boundaries. Therefore, a coordinated approach of all rural landowners is needed to manage weed and pest impacts through the Shire.

As a good starting point, get to know the key weed and animal pests that affect agricultural production within the Shire. Once identified, learn about the affective control measures available and how you can apply these to your property.



Managing Weeds in Wollondilly

Weeds are an ever-present threat to our local environment and way of life. Not only do they have a severe impact on agricultural activities, costing up to \$5 billion nationally, but they also contribute a raft of other factors, including:

- Competition with commercial plants resulting in reduced productivity;
- Adverse effects on public infrastructure through the deterioration of roadways and waterways;
- Adverse effects upon human and animal health from poisonous or irritating plants;

FACT SHEET

- Increased risk due to fire hazards created by uncontrolled weed growth;
- Adverse effects on soil and water quality (through soil contamination and aquatic plant pests);
- Adverse effects on tourism & recreation;
- Deterioration of natural ecosystems, through competition with native flora;
- Adverse effects upon the viability of rare or endangered species and ecological communities and other indigenous flora and fauna;

Weeds are generally divided up into two categories, noxious and environmental.

Noxious weeds are plants that have been declared under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* by the Minister for Primary Industries. Weeds with the potential to impact on agriculture, animal or human health or damage the environment are potential candidates for declaration as noxious weeds. There are noxious weeds that apply to the whole of NSW such as serrated tussock, Chilean needle grass and blackberry and specific to each local government area. Wollondilly Shire currently has 41 noxious species declared including St John's Wort, Paterson's Curse and Alligator Weed.

If you have noxious weeds growing on your property you **must** control the plants in accordance with their declared category, as defined by the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*. The NSW DPI website www.dpi.nsw.gov.au contains Prime facts on noxious weeds, their category and control methods. In addition, the Wollondilly Shire Council Biosecurity (Weed Management) Strategy 2020 - 2025 (<https://www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au/assets/Uploads/Wollondilly-Biosecurity-Weed-Management-Strategy-2020-to-2025-final-as-adopted2.pdf>) articulates Wollondilly Council's approach to managing Priority Weeds and working with other landholders across all land tenures.



Environmental weeds are those that, whilst not actually gazetted, still present a serious threat to the environment. Environmental weeds in Wollondilly include Privet, Moth vine, Madeira vine, Giant Reed, Lantana and Balloon vine. Environmental weeds threaten the survival of many native plants and animals because they:

- usually grow faster than native plants and successfully compete for the available nutrients, water, space and sunlight.
- often survive better than native plants as they may not be affected by the pests or diseases that would normally control them in their natural habitats.
- reduce natural diversity by smothering native plants or preventing them from growing back after clearing, fire or other disturbance.
- replace the native plants that animals use for shelter, food and nesting.

Animal Pests

Since colonisation of Australia we have dramatically changed the landscape through application of traditional European farming techniques and by introducing an array of animal and plant species. Certain animal species such as the fox, wild rabbits, cane toads, goats, feral pigs, cats, wild dogs and horses have populations that are threatening native flora and fauna and taking over ecosystems. Pest animals and insects cause serious economic losses to agricultural production and pose an unacceptable risk of exotic disease. Pest animals will

occupy any area that meets their needs. They can be found in national parks, state forests, council reserves and on private property.



Weed and Pest Contacts

There is a wealth of information available to landowners on control measures for noxious and environmental weeds and animal pests. The internet is a valuable resource for information on weed and animal pests, their impacts on the Australian environment, landholder responsibilities and affective control measures.

More specific contacts are as follows:

- **NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI)** – Call the Head Office on (02) 6391 3100, or Menangle Local Office Extension Office on (02) 4640 6333. Website <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/contact-us> contains further information.
- **Local Land Services** – Call on 1300 795 299 or further information available on website <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/nswgovdirectory/local-land-services>.
- **NSW Department of Environment and Heritage** – website:

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/>. Navigate through the website to find relevant information on pest and weed species, their impacts and control measures.

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For more
information contact
Wollondilly Shire Council
on **(02) 4677 1100**
or visit Council's website
wollondilly.nsw.gov.au