

## FORESTS AND WOODY PLANT WEEDS IN TASMANIA

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### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WEEDS IN PRIMARY PRODUCTION

The most important forest weeds are native eucalypts and acacias in plantations of *Pinus radiata*. Most eucalypt weeds arise from stump coppice and from lignotubers. The acacias are seedlings from ground-stored seeds.

During the first five years of the life of the plantation two to three weedings are required and the overall average cost of the combined weedings is over \$10.00 per acre. The present rate of plantation establishment by the Forestry Commission is approximately 5,000 acres (2,000 ha) per year and private plantings are now approaching 2,000 (800) acres per year.

Seedlings of native scrub species are important as weeds in regeneration of high quality eucalypt forests in high rainfall areas.

### PRESENT PRACTICE OF WEED CONTROL

In pine plantations reduction in numbers of eucalypt weeds is achieved first by burning felled eucalypt slash with intense fires in autumn prior to winter planting. The greatest proportion of the subsequent weeding of eucalypts is done by hand slashing, but increasing use is being made of stem injection with picloram.

Of the herbicides effective in killing eucalypts when applied as an overall foliage spray, picloram as Tordon 20K, has been found to cause least damage to pines and is being used in field-scale trials over several hundred acres applied with motorized knapsack misters.

Wattles are controlled partially by pre-planting spraying of dense seedling patches with 2.4.5-T and some later spraying in cases where the acacias overtop the pines. Main control, however, is by hand slashing.

### EFFECTIVENESS OF RESEARCH

There is a very definite need throughout Australia for a selective herbicide to use among *Pinus radiata* and the chemical industries should be encouraged to develop such a herbicide.

Research on forest weeds in Tasmania has led to no major reduction of the weeding problem but has helped to reduce the

rate of cost increases brought about by the change in emphasis to planting previously forested land, where weed problems are more consistent.

## WOODY PLANT WEEDS

### Occurrence and Significance

Woody plant weeds do not play a very important role in Tasmanian agriculture. Some aliens, blackberries, *Rubus* spp., gorse, *Ulex europaeus*, briar, *Rosa rubiginosa* and native wattles become abundant on non-crop areas or grazing lands which have been neglected. Willows cause trouble along some river banks. A number of species when felled or pollarded produce undesirable coppice or sucker growth; the latter mainly in suburban areas.

### Present practice of Weed Control

Good attention to pasture management particularly with regard to grazing pressure prevents the incursion of gorse, blackberry, and wattle. Slashing grubbing, spraying with 2,4,5-T or cultivation are sometimes used to contain these plants at paddock boundaries or when reclaiming neglected areas for farm land.

Dormant bud spraying with 2,4,5-T in oil is used to control sucker growth and, either this same combination or picloram is used for basal bark, frill cut or cut-stump treatment on larger trees.

### Effectiveness of Research Extension or Legislation

Little research on woody weeds has been carried out except for forestry purposes but extension and legislation play a part in the control of some of them.