

The NSW Biological Control Taskforce – collaborating to maintain a functional biocontrol agent delivery pipeline

Troy R.F. Brown

NSW Department of Primary Industries, Grafton Primary Industries Institute, Trenayr Road, Junction Hill,
New South Wales 2460, Australia
(troy.brown@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Summary There is an increasing need to apply self-sustaining weed management technologies. History has shown that biocontrol is one of the most cost-effective, self-sustaining management technologies for the control of weeds. Biocontrol is continually under scientific refinement for not only maximising returns on investment, but also maximising safety and impact.

The NSW Biological Control Taskforce (the taskforce) funds and promotes biocontrol research alongside rearing, release, and monitoring programs (implementation activities) through a shared investment commitment. Target weeds are reviewed and selected annually by the Taskforce Steering Committee following a prioritisation framework developed in conjunction with Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI), NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (NSW OEH) and the NSW Wales Environmental Trust (The Trust).

Biocontrol agents included in the implementation activities have received approval for release from

the Australian Federal Government and are reared, released and monitored strategically to achieve the desired result. Current weed species targeted for implementation include salvinia (*Salvinia molesta* D.S.Mitch.), cat's claw creeper (*Dolichandra unguis-cati* (L.) Lohmann), madeira vine (*Anredera cordifolia* (Ten.) Steenis), crofton weed (*Ageratina adenophora* (Spreng.) R.M.King & H.Rob), water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes* (C.Mart.) Solms), smooth tree pear (*Opuntia monacantha* (Willd.) Haw), water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes* L.), boxing glove cactus (*Cylindropuntia fulgida* F.M.Knuth var. *mamillata* (Engelm.) Backeb) and Hudson pear (*Cylindropuntia rosea* (DC.) Backeb).

New members are welcomed encouraged to engage as soon as possible with the NSW Biocontrol Taskforce. Collaboratively, the Taskforce aims to develop cost effective biocontrol solutions to combat weeds.

Keywords Weed biological control, NSW Biocontrol Taskforce.