

## **CAWS Travel Award Report**

I would like to express my thanks to Council of Australasian Weed Societies (CAWS) for providing support that allowed me to attend the 17<sup>th</sup> Australasian Weeds Conference in Christchurch, New Zealand from September 26<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> 2010. The conference attracted key scientists conducting research in different areas of weed science including weed ecology & biology, biological control, weed management in different environments etc. The scientific program featured a strong emphasis (one whole session) on management of parthenium weed, my area of research.

Of particular value was the first day of the conference which started with a keynote address by Dr Fred Yelverton on integrated vegetation management along roadsides in the south-eastern United States followed by concurrent sessions on various aspects of weed management involving a number of speakers and topics. Day 2 was mainly on biological control which was of particular interest for me and there were some wonderful research talks on the subject. Day 3 was reserved for field trips and there were 4 options to go and I opted for pasture weeds of New Zealand. It was well planned trip and very interactive with expert guides.

I presented my current research on Day 4 on the management of parthenium weed: enhancing the effectiveness of biological control through competition from beneficial plants. I received helpful feedback about my work and a healthy discussion followed after the talk and on breaks.

Overall the conference was a very rewarding experience, providing not only invaluable scientific exposure but also networking opportunities. I would like to thank CAWS again for making my attendance possible.

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