

Impact Assessment Record

Scientific Name: *Praxelis clematidea* R. M. King & H. Rob.

Common name: praxelis

QUESTION	COMMENTS	RATING	CONFIDENCE
<b>Social</b>			
1. Restrict human access?	“Annual or short-lived perennial herb” (Waterhouse, 2003). “It can grow up to c. 1.2m tall but most plants are c. 40-80cm” (Csurhes, 1998). They have brittle stems (CRC Weed Management, 2003). Infestations of <i>Praxelis</i> would not impede pedestrian access as the plants would be easily pushed aside or crushed underfoot.	<b>L</b>	<b>MH</b>
2. Reduce tourism?	“When crushed they [the leaves] emit a pungent odour similar to cat’s urine” (CRC Weed Management, 2003). “Unpleasant-smelling, softly-hairy herb, 20-80cm tall... The flower colour is light violet...but can appear blue to purple” (Corlett & Shaw, 1995). “Forms monospecific stands, excluding other vegetation” (PIER, 2005). Flowering generally occurs from November to May but some flowers may appear at any time of the year (CRC Weed management, 2003). The brightly coloured flowers could be obvious to most visitors for much of the year and the smell would be off-putting to many people, but the presence of this weed would be unlikely to inhibit activity.	<b>ML</b>	<b>MH</b>
3. Injurious to people?	“Anecdotal reports suggest that it may be poisonous to...humans if ingested” (Veldkamp, 1999) but there was no further record of the plant’s ability to injure people (CRC Weed Management, 2003). However, it is unlikely to be ingested.	<b>ML</b>	<b>MH</b>
4. Damage to cultural sites?	The brightly coloured flowers could have a moderate visual effect for much of the year (see description from Q. 2).	<b>ML</b>	<b>MH</b>
<b>Abiotic</b>			
5. Impact flow?	“Grows vigorously along riverbanks” (CRC Weed Management, 2003), but there is no evidence that it invades the water.	<b>L</b>	<b>M</b>
6. Impact water quality?	See Q. 5.	<b>L</b>	<b>M</b>
7. Increase soil erosion?	“Can become the dominant herbaceous plant in open eucalypt woodlands.” In drier areas <i>Praxelis</i> dies off until the next rainy season and also “grows vigorously along riverbanks” (CRC Weed Management, 2003). There is the potential for large areas of soil to become bare when <i>Praxelis</i> dies off and with heavy rain and/or flooding of waterways, large scale soil movement is likely with major offsite implications.	<b>H</b>	<b>M</b>
8. Reduce biomass?	As this plant can “become the dominant herbaceous plant in open eucalypt woodlands” and can seasonally die off in drier areas (CRC Weed Management, 2003), biomass may be slightly decreased where there was once a more permanent herbaceous cover.	<b>MH</b>	<b>M</b>
9. Change fire regime?	This species is not noted for changes to fire regime. As an herbaceous annual or short-lived perennial that can invade grasslands (CRC Weed Management, 2003), it may reduce fuel load and flammability, thereby reducing the frequency and/or intensity of fires in these communities. Elsewhere, where it replaces similar vegetation it is likely to have little effect.	<b>ML</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>Community Habitat</b>			
10. Impact on composition (a) high value EVC	Climate modelling shows that this species is not likely to occur as an invasive plant in Victoria.	<b>L</b>	<b>H</b>

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(b) medium value EVC	Climate modelling shows that this species is not likely to occur as an invasive plant in Victoria.	L	H
(c) low value EVC	Climate modelling shows that this species is not likely to occur as an invasive plant in Victoria.	L	H
11. Impact on structure?	Its ability to “become the dominant herbaceous plant in open eucalypt woodlands” (CRC Weed Management, 2003) could have a major effect on ground level vegetation.	MH	M
12. Effect on threatened flora?	Climate modelling shows that this species is not likely to occur as an invasive plant in Victoria.	L	H
<b>Fauna</b>			
13. Effect on threatened fauna?	Climate modelling shows that this species is not likely to occur as an invasive plant in Victoria.	L	H
14. Effect on non-threatened fauna?	“It can become the dominant herbaceous plant in open eucalypt woodlands” (CRC Weed Management, 2003). It is “not eaten by stock” (Pollock et al, 2004) and if this is true for other fauna it may reduce access to food, forcing them to seek food elsewhere.	MH	M
15. Benefits fauna?	“There is some evidence that it may be poisonous to stock...if ingested” (CRC Weed Management, 2003), so it is unlikely to provide a food source for fauna and as an “annual or short-lived perennial herb” (Waterhouse, 2003) to 40-80cm (Csurhes, 1998), would not provide much shelter either.	H	M
16. Injurious to fauna?	“There is some evidence that it may be poisonous to stock...if ingested” (CRC Weed Management, 2003), so it may be poisonous to fauna when present.	MH	M
<b>Pest Animal</b>			
17. Food source to pests?	Toxicity (CRC Weed Management, 2003) probably precludes this plant from being a food source to pests.	L	MH
18. Provides harbor?	As an “annual or short-lived perennial herb” (Waterhouse, 2003) to 40-80cm (Csurhes, 1998), this plant would not offer much shelter.	L	MH
<b>Agriculture</b>			
19. Impact yield?	“Forms monospecific stands, excluding other vegetation” (PIER, 2005), “not eaten by stock” (Pollock et al, 2004). “An abundant weed of...pastures...it encroaches upon sugarcane plantations and other cultivated areas (Waterhouse, 2003). “In Hong Kong and mainland China...it appears set to become a significant weed of dryland agriculture...There is some evidence that it may be poisonous to stock...if ingested” (CRC Weed Management, 2003). Large infestations may significantly reduce the carrying capacity of pasture by forming poisonous monocultures and may reduce crop yields by encroachment.	MH	H

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20. Impact quality?	It is postulated that it was introduced to north Queensland as “a contaminant of pasture seeds imported from Brazil” (Waterhouse, 2003) and this suggests that it would be unlikely to be identified as reducing the quality of pasture seed crops. Whilst it invades other crops (CRC Weed Management, 2003) its bright flower colour (Corlett & Shaw, 1995) would make an infestation obvious and able to be avoided during harvest.	<b>L</b>	<b>MH</b>
21. Affect land value?	Reduced productivity may affect land value, see Q. 19, but probably not by more than 10%	<b>MH</b>	<b>MH</b>
22. Change land use?	Increased costs of harvest (see Q. 23) and reduced quality of produce (see Q. 20) may make stocking and/or cropping less viable on infested land.	<b>MH</b>	<b>MH</b>
23. Increase harvest costs?	“Could threaten, and significantly increase the costs of managing, such crops as bananas, other fruits and sugar cane” (CRC Weed Management, 2003).	<b>H</b>	<b>M</b>
24. Disease host/vector?	Not noted as a disease host or vector in CRC Weed Management, 2003.	<b>L</b>	<b>M</b>

References cited:

- Corlett RT and Shaw JC 1995, ‘*Praxelis clematidea*: yesterday South America, today Hong Kong, tomorrow the world?’ *Memoirs of the Hong Kong Natural History Society* vol. 20, p. 235-236
- CRC Weed Management 2003, *Weed Management Guide: Praxelis- Praxelis clematidea*, CRC Weed Management, Australia.
- Csurhes S & Edwards R 1998, *Potential Environmental Weeds in Australia, Candidate Species for Preventative Control*, Biodiversity Group, Environment Australia, Canberra, ACT.
- Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk (PIER), 2005, *Hawaiian Ecosystems at Risk project (HEAR)*, US Geological Survey, USA, Viewed: 12/10/2005, [www.hear.org/pier/species/praxelis\\_clematidea.htm](http://www.hear.org/pier/species/praxelis_clematidea.htm).
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- Waterhouse, B.M 2003. Know your enemy: recent records of potentially serious weeds in northern Australia, Papua New Guinea and Papua (Indonesia). *Telopea* 10(1): 483.

Revisions

Date                      Revised by                      Revision