

SOUTHERN ACT CATCHMENT GROUP

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Regional education on African Lovegrass - an integrated approach

Background to the project

African Lovegrass (ALG) is a highly invasive environmental and agricultural weed in the region. Enhanced education & improved control of ALG infestations were the main recommendations from a recent ALG regional forum. It is imperative to increase community awareness and capacity to control this weed to stop large areas of the ACT from becoming monocultures. This project is funded under an Australian Government Community Action Grant, and will produce educational materials on the impacts of ALG, best-practice control & identify priority areas. It will also increase community participation & improve coordination in ALG control and containment.

The project will work with project partners to:

- Identify areas for priority control through analysis of existing data to produce a map indicating the ALG distribution in 2000.
- Undertake surveys to map the 2010 distribution, and provide an estimate for the likely 2020 distribution, based on current control levels;
- Produce a poster on ALG impacts and actions to reduce these impacts;
- Place articles in local press with same aim as poster (above), advertise in local press when conditions for the control by herbicide is optimal;
- Conduct Field days to demonstrate best-practice control methods on nearby farms where trials on ALG control are established; and
- Add to information on NRM websites.

Background to this survey

A survey is being undertaken along major roads in the ACT and surrounding NSW. In addition, community members are being asked to send in records of African Lovegrass (and incidental records of other invasive weeds) in other areas of the ACT and surrounding NSW, including Canberra Nature Park, suburban roadsides, urban open space, areas surrounding public buildings etc.

These records will provide a perspective on the current distribution of the species. In 2001 a similar survey was undertaken, but concentrating on the distribution of another highly invasive introduced species, Chilean Needle Grass. The results were extremely helpful in identifying areas where the species occurred, and where it didn't occur (at that stage, it was not found at all in Gungahlin). Because volunteers in 2001 also provided records of sightings of African Lovegrass, this information can assist in comparing the current distribution with the past distribution in a range of sites and across a range of land uses.

Your input

Your help is requested, to fill out the following form at sites where you see African Love Grass growing, but also in sites that you do not find the grass. Please feel free to contact Sarah Sharp on 0402 576412 or Steve Welch on 6296 6400 about this project.

Southern ACT Catchment Management Group African Lovegrass Survey 2011

Name:.....**Date:**.....

Contact Number / email:.....

Site.....

Species Abundance: Once the species in the survey site have been identified please estimate the abundance of the target weeds. Please feel free to note other identified species at the site.

Species	Abundance	In clumps or widespread?	Other notes
African Lovegrass <i>(Eragrostis curvula)</i>			
Chilean Needle Grass <i>(Nassella neesiana)</i>			
Serrated Tussock <i>(Nassella trichotoma)</i>			
St John's Wort <i>(Hypericum perforatum)</i>			
Other species identified			

Abundance:

1) Localised

- A – Abundant = Dominant**
- C – Common = scattered and patchy but not dominant**
- O – Occasional = Uncommon**
- R – Rare**
- N – Nil/absent**

2) Widespread

- A – Abundant = Dominant**
- C – Common = scattered and patchy but not dominant**
- O – Occasional = Uncommon**
- R – Rare**
- N – Nil/absent**

So say on one farm the ALG may be right across all paddocks – so it is 'Widespread'. Then an estimate of cover has to be made. It is scattered or patchy right across – so it is 'Common'. So you would say it is 'Widespread and Common' or 2C.

On another farm only a minority of paddocks have ALG. But the ALG cover in these paddocks is Abundant. So the cover is 'Localised and Abundant' or 1A.

A mono-culture across a majority of paddocks would be – 'Widespread and Abundant' (the worst possible case) or 2A

Southern ACT Catchment Management Group African Lovegrass Survey 2011

Site Description: Please fill out the following information about the site surveyed.

- 1. Is the site surveyed in;
 - Urban ACT
 - Rural ACT
 - Open Space
 - Other.....

- 2. Is the area;
 - Urban parkland
 - Agricultural land
 - Nature reserve
 - Rural roadside
 - Nature strip
 - Residential land
 - Sport / recreational land
 - Other.....

- 3. Is the area;
 - Mown
 - Unmown
 - Grazed
 - Ungrazed
 - Other.....

- 4. Is the area wet or damp from;
 - Concrete drains
 - Natural streams/rivers
 - Damp depressions
 - Other water sources
 - Not wet or damp
 - Other.....

- 5. Are the surveyed species growing underneath;
 - Native Trees and/or Shrubs
 - Exotic Trees and/or Shrubs
 - No overstorey species

- 6. Other species present (tick more than one)
 - Native trees &/or shrubs
 - Exotic trees &/or shrubs
 - Native understorey
 - Exotic understorey

- 7. What disturbance is noticeable at the site?
(Key: High (>70%), Medium (50%), Low (<30%))
 - Bare ground.....
 - Exotic weed cover.....
 - Soil Disturbance.....
 - Evidence of Dumping.....
 - Other disturbance.....

- 8. Size of site surveyed;
 - <1 hectare
 - 1-5 hectares
 - 5-10 hectares
 - 10-20 hectares
 - >20 hectares

9. Site Address/Location:
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If possible please send an A4 photocopy of a map of the survey site. The details of the type of map used would also be useful.

Please forward completed survey forms by the end of April 2011 to:
Sarah Sharp
PO Box 5154
Lynham ACT 2602;
or email to:
sarahsharp@grapevine.net.au

Should you require further information and/or forms please contact **Sarah on sarahsharp@grapevine.net.au or 0402 576412.**

Thank you for your assistance.

If you wish to get feedback from the survey or attend workshops or find out more about the project outcomes, please provide your contact details below.

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