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SGLN Weed Fact Sheet

Willows

FAST FACT:

Crack Willows are found along thousands of kilometres of streams in southeastern Australia where they were widely planted for stream stabilisation. It spreads almost exclusively by plant parts so it is only associated with streams.

have I got willows at my place?

Willows or *Salix spp.* (Botanical name) are a diverse and complex plant group. There have been more than 100 willow taxa introduced in Australia as such plant features including growth form, bark, leaves and flowers can be varied. Willows are deciduous and can be in the form of a tree or a shrub and have weeping or upright stems. Most willow plants are either male or female. In general (with the exception of the pussy willow) the leaves are long and narrow with finely toothed edges. Willows can be found growing in permanently, seasonally wet or waterlogged sites including for example river banks and depressions.

why should I worry about it?

Classified as a noxious weed, there is a requirement to control the spread of certain willows. They are considered Weed of National Significance due to their invasiveness, potential to spread and economic and environmental impacts. Willows have invaded thousands of kilometres of river banks and wetlands throughout temperate Australia. Unlike most vegetation, willows spread their roots into the bed of a water course, as a result slowing the flow of water reducing aeration and ultimately causing flooding or erosion. To date millions of dollars have been spent each year on willow control in south eastern Australia.

how can I deal with it?

Prior to undertaking on ground works, willow control requires planning, resources skills and appropriate equipment. Techniques typically used on ground involve a range of manual removal and herbicide application.

- Pull seedlings by hand
- Mature trees should be 'cut and painted' or injected with herbicide
- Start control in the uppermost part of the catchment...
- ...preferably on the inside of bends... ..but be aware of stream flow dynamics
- Follow-up will be required

Help is available from Landcare- contact the Project Officer.

where can I get further help?

South Gippsland Landcare Network can arrange a site visit by a Landcare Project Officer to discuss weeds and control.

Phone 03 5662 5759 or 0428 317 928.

SGLN weeds website is at www.southgippslandweeds.com.au. This website has plenty of great information on weed identification and control. You can also contact the Landcare Project Officer through the web page.

South Gippsland Landcare Network

The South Gippsland Landcare Network is made up of 19 Landcare groups. Landcare encourages land stewardship and aims to improve the long term productivity and sustainability of our land.

If you would like to become involved in Landcare in South Gippsland you can contact us on 5662 5759 or email us on sgln@landcare.net

The South Gippsland Community Weeds Taskforce meets to discuss weed control policy and strategies.

Contact the Taskforce through the SGLN.

