Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Biosecurity Queensland

Fact sheet

DECLARED CLASS 3 PEST PLANT

February 2014

Cat's claw creeper

Macfadyena unguis-cati (L.) A.H.Gentry
(syn. *Dolichandra unguis-cati* (L.) L.Lohmann)

Cat's claw creeper is a native of tropical America and is an aggressive climber that was used as an ornamental in older-style Queensland gardens. This vine has the ability to completely smother native vegetation, even growing up over trees, and many bushland areas already have serious infestations of this weed. The vine has a vigorous root and tuber system, which adds to difficulties in controlling the weed.

Declaration details

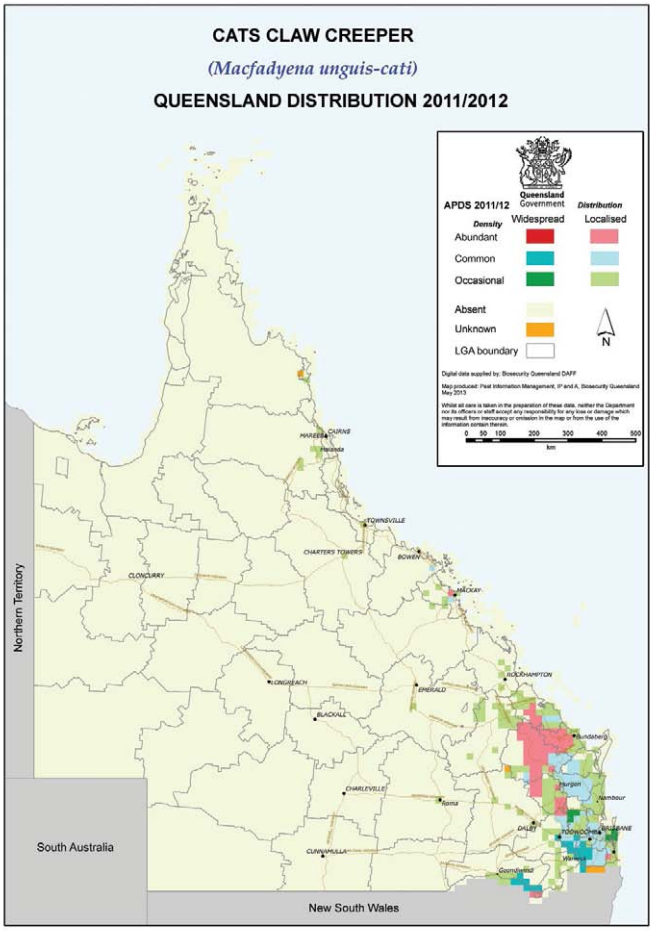
Cat's claw creeper is a Class 3 declared pest plant under the Queensland legislation. Landholders are not required to control a Class 3 declared pest plant on their land unless a pest control notice is issued by a local government because the pest is causing or has potential to cause an negative impact on an adjacent environmentally significant area.

It is an offence to supply a Class 3 pest. A permit for specific purposes may be issued by Biosecurity Queensland.

Description and general information

Cat's claw creeper is a vine with long slender stems. Older stems become very woody with time. Its leaves each have two leaflets, with a three-clawed tendril (the cat's claw) growing between them. It has large, bright yellow, bell-shaped flowers in spring. The vine bears very long, narrow and flat pods containing many papery seeds.

Map 1. Distribution of cat's claw creeper in Queensland



Habitat and distribution

Cat's claw creeper prefers warm-temperate, tropical and sub-tropical areas. It can be found in gardens, over fences, along roadsides, waterways and in disturbed rainforests. It occurs in coastal and sub-coastal areas of south-eastern Queensland, and in central and northern Queensland.

Control

Physical

Use a pruning saw, machete or brush hook to cut all leads/stems up the trees. All above the cut will die, but regrowth will occur from the underground tubers. Digging the tubers out is not practical in most cases. Don't allow the regrowth to reach host tree's canopy; if they get away you will have to re-cut them.

Herbicide control

The regrowth is best treated with a foliar spray. Glyphosate 360 (mixed at a rate of 83 mL to each 1 L of water) can be applied in a cut stump method. It is best done in pairs. Cut the lead as close to the ground as possible and spray/paint on the herbicide.

The glyphosate must be applied within 15 seconds of cutting—while the sap is running—to take the poison down into the roots and tubers. If not within 15 seconds, re-cut lower and try again.

Because of the multitude of tubers the herbicide tends to knock them down one at a time with new regrowth coming from the next tuber. Be prepared to continue control over the next five years.

The herbicides listed in the table that follows are permitted to be used in the listed situations. Before using any herbicide always read the label carefully. All herbicides must be applied strictly in accordance with the directions on the label and the conditions in the APVMA permit.

Biological control

Cat's claw creeper is currently a target for biological control. The tingid bug *Carvalhotingis visenda*, the moth *Hypocosmia pyrochroma* and a leaf-mining jewel beetle *Hylaeogena jureceki* have been released. The tingid is widely established in majority of release sites and cause visible effects in some areas.

Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland (call 13 25 23 or visit our website at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

Biological control damage

3 **Cat's claw creeper** *Macfadyena unguis-cati*

Table 1 Herbicides permitted under APVMA PER11463 and PER10533 for the control of cat's claw creeper

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Comments
Pasture, non-crop situation (PERMIT PER10533)	360 g/L glyphosate	10 mL/L water	Foliar application Ensure vines are actively growing at time of treatment and not under stress of drought, waterlogging or cold. (0–2 m height) High-volume (knapsack or handgun) spray to wet foliage, ensuring complete coverage over top growing terminals.
		83 mL/L water	Cut stump Ensure vines are actively growing at time of treatment and not under stress of drought, waterlogging or cold. Cut vine close to ground and immediately wet stump surface thoroughly using splatter gun, spray, swab or brush. Remove any branches on the stump and treat any cut surface.
	500 g/L dicamba	4 mL/L water	Foliar application Ensure vines are actively growing at time of treatment and not under stress of drought, waterlogging or cold. (0–2 m height) High-volume (knapsack or handgun) spray to wet foliage, ensuring complete coverage over top growing terminals.
		33 mL/L water	Cut stump Ensure vines are actively growing at time of treatment and not under stress of drought, waterlogging or cold. Cut vine close to ground and immediately wet stump surface thoroughly using splatter gun, spray, swab or brush. Remove any branches on the stump and treat any cut surface.
Non-agricultural areas, bushland, forests, wetlands, coastal and adjacent areas permit PER11463	200 g/L fluroxypyr	35 mL/L diesel/ kerosene	Basal bark spray

Read the label carefully before use and always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.

Persons who wish to prepare for use and/or use products for the purposes specified in APVMA permits PER11463 or PER10533 must read, or have read to them, the details and conditions of the permit. APVMA permit PER11463 expires on 30 June 2014 and PER10533 expires on 31 July 2018. Both are available from the APVMA website at www.apvma.gov.au

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