

TIPS FOR MANAGING AFRICAN BOXTHORN

Mature plants management:

Cut out branches and remove, to get to base of plant. The purpose is to expose a long part of the trunk near the root base, as well as direct trunk cuts. Best tools for cutting it back are brush-cutter with a two-tooth shredder blade or a small chain saw. Large patches can be initially pushed back using a tractor. Once you have a 'cleared' space, use a sharp tool to "rough up" about 30cm of exposed trunk, as close to the roots as possible. Immediately spray with a dyed (coloured) 90% glyphosate-10% water mix. This will kill the taproot system. It does not require a large amount of chemicals. Also put chemical mix on to any exposed trunk cuttings.

Seedlings:

When seedlings appear in autumn or spring do cultivation, pulling out or splatter spraying (as a last resort) before fruits form and tap roots establish.

Bio-mass waste:

Slash and burn

Follow-up:

Keep an eye on treated sites and repeat treatments on any re-growth. This should diminish over time.

Best time and methods for weed control:

Summer – hand pull. Autumn – Dig or Cut and Paint. Winter – Dig. Spring – Dig or Cut and Paint.





“Gains can be made quickly on controlling woody weeds, such as African Boxthorn, if they are targeted strategically and incrementally”

Daniel Anderson

General notes on African Boxthorn

- Perennial, native to South Africa.
- Quick spreading spiny shrub to five metres tall and wide, spread by seed.
- Without effective control, African Boxthorn has potential to significantly increase and become more abundant
- Once established, hard to eradicate . Removal or killing taproot desirable. Sustained effort is required.
- Both physical and chemical control methods can be used, but any control efforts must be long-term to prevent new populations establishing from existing populations.
- Prevention is the most cost-effective form of weed control. Early detection and removal will prevent spread.

Potential impacts of African Boxthorn

- Once established African Boxthorn can rapidly form impenetrable spiny thickets, reducing stock movement and the land available for pasture.
- The fruit is a breeding ground for insect pests such as fruit fly and dried fruit beetles.
- The fruits are thought to be poisonous to livestock and humans.

Links to further information:

Atlas of Living Australia profiles

- [African Boxthorn profile](#)

Weeds of Australia

- [African Boxthorn fact sheet](#)

Daniel Anderson of Apical, tackling African Boxthorn at the Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council 25 June 2022 Workshop on Practical Weed Control, teaching participants his tried and tested methods for efficient and effective weed control.

Photo: Larry O'Loughlin

The Araluen Creek Weed Management Plan survey (2021) recorded African Boxthorn in 64 of the 91 survey sections along Araluen Creek.

Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group is committed to implementing the Weed Management Plan for the Bridge to Bridge Project, along Araluen Creek (Araluen camp ground bridge to Neringla Rd bridge).