

The Bridal Creeper

newsletter of the national asparagus weeds management committee

back copies available from www.weeds.org.au/bridalcreeper/

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Season greetings

The National Asparagus Weeds Management Committee wishes all fellow weedies a happy and peaceful 2008

Bridal Creeper Management Heros

Mae Adams, Janet Carey & Helen Macrae of Friends of Venus Bay Peninsula in Victoria have been awarded a prestigious Coastcare Local Hero medal for their outstanding contribution to repairing and protecting our magnificent coast.

the retention and enhancement of native vegetation in gardens and is establishing a demonstration gardens at Venus Bay Community Centre and on another nearby block of public land. The group received \$25,000 from the Australian Government Envirofund for this venture.



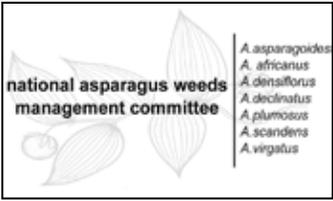
As part of Coastcare Week exceptional local heroes such as Mae, Janet and Helen from Friends of Venus Bay Peninsula have received Coastcare medals for tireless work in protecting local coastal environments.

The Friends are running a public education process to encourage landholders to go native. Group members are involved in the protection of the endangered Hooded Plover, assisting with monitoring nests during the spring and summer.



The Friends of Venus Bay Peninsula group formed 2 years ago. In that short time they have tackled **bridal creeper** *Asparagus asparagoides* a Weed of National Significance, and Cape Ivy *Delairea odorata*, both serious environmental weed in the area. In response to local sightings of bandicoots the Friends organised a comprehensive survey to be carried out resulting in a co-ordinated fox control program on private and public land. Coast Action / Coastcare provided financial support for these projects. The group is also trying to promote

Mae (left) and Janet (Right) and effort. The results they achieve are truly remarkable. It is more crucial than ever to get the balance right between enjoying our natural resources now and conserving them for future generations. Coastcare heroes give up their own time to make sure the coast remains spectacular."



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The Coastcare movement has 60,000 volunteers in 2,000 community groups around the country - all contributing towards keeping the Aussie coast beautiful. Coastcare volunteers tackle a huge range of issues such as coastal erosion, pollution, weeds and looking after injured seabirds and marine animals.

“Increasing storm activity and other extreme events caused by climate change are threatening our coast and Coastcare groups are building resilience into the coastline through projects such as dune revegetation and reef monitoring initiatives” said Brian Scarsbrick, Coastcare CEO.

Guy has also called for more heroes in local areas to take up the Coastcare call. “We encourage everyone to get involved,” Guy said. “Coastcare is all about doing something practical to protect and repair Australia’s coastline. More volunteers are always needed. Just go to www.coastcare.com.au and look up your local group to get going.”

Brian Scarsbrick added “When it comes to preserving our coastal areas, team work is the key and the more people that get involved, the better.”

“Volunteering is part of the backbone of Australia. What’s so remarkable about Coastcare is the massive amount of hours people put in. Coastcare volunteers identify local environmental problems and work together to achieve practical solutions. The results are remarkable.”

“Coastcare Week shines the spotlight on local heroes making a difference to their coastal and marine environment. Our fragile ecosystems need to be protected and preserved and Australia is leading the world with Coastcare and community action. Action is what this is all about – and that deserves to be saluted.”

Mae Adams chairs the National Asparagus Weeds Management Committee which is charged with implementing the National Bridal Creeper Management Strategy. Full details of the strategy can be found at <http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/bridalcreeper/>

That was 2007

So another bridal creeper growing season has passed. 2007 was a year of mixed fortune for management works across the country.

In Queensland an isolated patch of bridal creeper located in Crows Nest outside the town of Toowoomba was targeted for eradication. This may take a couple of years but there is every indication that the program will be a success. The infestation is relatively small.

The eradication effort in Tasmania continued last year. All known bridal creeper sites have been mapped and treated. Herbicide trials are underway on King Island to establish what chemicals can be used to reduce off target damage to Melaleuca.

CSIRO Entomology and Department of Primary Industries Victoria received funding through the last round of the Federal *Defeating the Weed Menace* program. This allowed for further releases of biological control agents in New South Wales, where only limited releases had been made in the past, and in the Murray Valley region along the New South Wales and Victorian border. The project will also see the completion of the seven year study on the impact the rust fungus has had at research sites across the country.

The management effort to contain and reduce the range of the Western Cape form of bridal creeper showed very promising results. In the South East of South Australia and across the Victorian border all known infestations were treated with herbicide. Early indications are that a high rate of kill was achieved. We wait for next season to see what re sprouts. In the Adelaide Hills all sites were treated but reports warn that the weed may not be responding as well to the herbicides used in this region. Issues of rates, timing and application methods need to be reviewed in 2008.

This is just a snap shot of what happened last year. I know that rust has been liberally spread across the country and programs for the other Asparagus weeds are in place. To everybody involved in Asparagus weed management may I extend the Committee’s thanks and wish you well for 2008.

Asparagus Threatening Coastlines

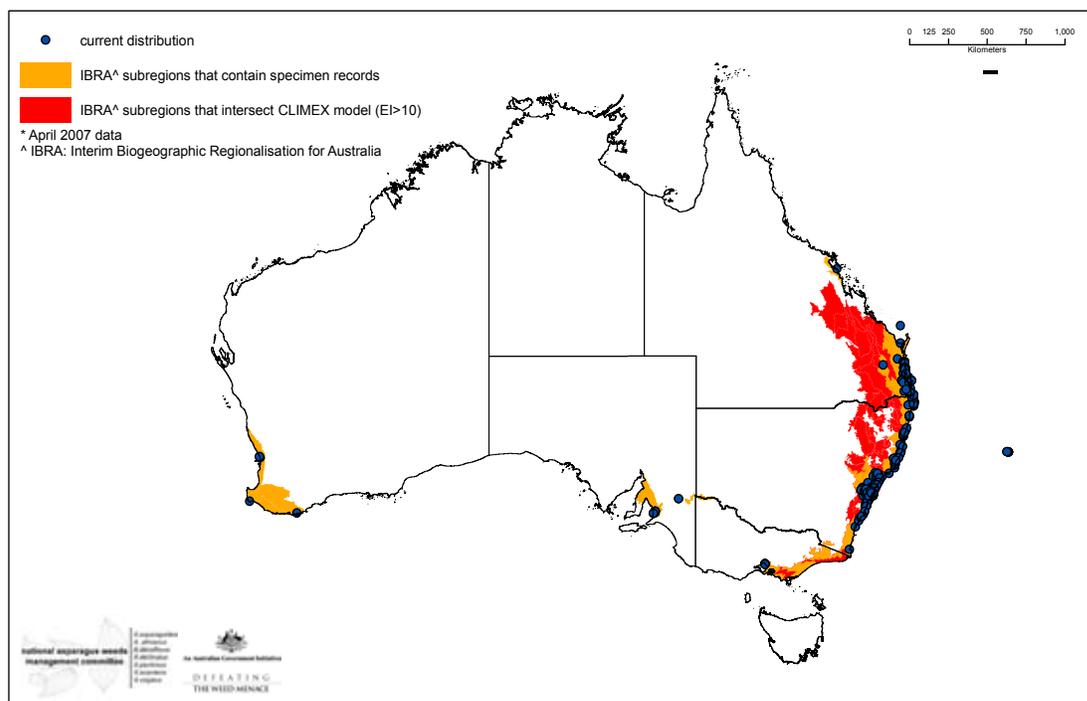
Ground (Basket) asparagus *Asparagus aethiopicus* has become a serious invader of native coastal environments in New South Wales (NSW) and South East Queensland (QLD). The weed is also present in Western Australia and is currently being targeted for eradication under the States *Save our Species* initiative. Modelling of

potential spread has the weed extending its growth range into coastal Victoria as far south as Melbourne and into the hinterland of both QLD and NSW. Current infestations pose a more immediate threat as in-filling between isolated sites will see a significant increase in weed's density within its existing growth range.



Best practice management techniques for ground asparagus can be found in the *Asparagus Best Practice Manual*. The relevant section is downloadable from the bridal creeper website at <http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/bridalcreeper/>. A more detailed paper on chemical trials for effective control is also available on the bridal creeper website under the *Plant Protection Quarterly* section. Look for the paper entitled ***The chemical control of the environmental weed basket asparagus (A. aethiopicus) in Queensland***. Grubbing out the growth crown, which lies just below the soil surface remains the most effective management technique. This is labour intensive and does expose bare ground to secondary weed invasion and erosion. Methsulfuron methyl is the most effective herbicide for ground asparagus.

Current and potential distribution of *Asparagus aethiopicus/densiflorus**



Rouge's Gallery

Species list reproduced from the CRC for Australian Weed Management . *The introduced flora of Australia and its weed status* publication.
Full publication available as a download from http://www.weeds.crc.org.au/documents/intro_flora_australia.pdf

Asparagus aethiopicus L.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
See: *Asparagus sprengeri* Regel
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A

Asparagus africanus Lam.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A - 5A

Asparagus albus L.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
Asparagus aphyllus L.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed

Asparagus arborescens Willd. ex Schult. & Schult. f.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus asparagoides (L.) Druce
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
See: *Asparagus medeoloides* (L. f.) Thunb, *Myrsiphyllum asparagoides* (L.) Willd.
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A - 3A - 4A - 5A

Asparagus brachyphyllus Turcz.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus cooperi Baker
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed

Asparagus crispus Lam.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
= *Asparagus declinatus* L.

Asparagus declinatus L.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
See: *Asparagus crispus* Lam., *Myrsiphyllum declinatum* (L.) Oberm.
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A - 4A

Asparagus densiflorus (Kunth) Jessop
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
See: *Asparagus meyerii* nom. illeg., *Protasparagus aethiopicus* (L.) Oberm., *Protasparagus densiflorus* (Kunth) Oberm.
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A - 4A - 5

Asparagus falcatus L.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed - N

Asparagus fallax Svent.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus fasciculatus Thunb.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus filicinus Buch.-Ham. ex D. Don
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed

Asparagus laricifolius A. Berg.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus laricinus Burch.

Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
See: *Protasparagus laricinus* (Burch.) Oberm.

Asparagus macowanii Baker
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus madagascariensis Baker
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus maritimus Mill.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus medeoloides (L. f.) Thunb
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
= *Asparagus asparagoides* (L.) W. Wight

Asparagus meyerii nom. illeg.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
= *Asparagus densiflorus* (Kunth) Jessop

Key to weed list

Weed: There is a published reference to this plant as a weed somewhere in the world.

N: This plant has naturalised somewhere in Australia.

1: This plant has been recorded as a weed of the natural environment.

2: This plant has been recorded to escape from cultivation.

3: This plant has been recorded as a weed of agriculture.

4: This plant has been recorded as a noxious (declared) weed. This is a legal category and may take the form of a prohibition on entry, sale and movement to requirements to eradicate or control.

5: This plant has been recorded as an invasive species. This is the most serious criterion that can be applied to a plant and is generally used for serious high impact environmental and / or agricultural weeds that spread rapidly and often create monocultures.

A: The capital A after any of the preceding numbers indicates that this species has met this criterion in Australia.

Asparagus officinalis L.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A - 3A - 5

Asparagus persicus Baker
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus plumosus Baker
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A - 4A - 5A

Asparagus pseudoscaber Grecescu
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus racemosus Willd.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed

Asparagus ramosissimus Baker
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus retrofractus L.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
See: *Protasparagus retrofractus* (L.) Oberm.
 Weed

Asparagus sativus Mill.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus scandens Thunb.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A

Asparagus schoberioides Kunth
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus scoparius Lowe
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus setaceus (Kunth) Jessop
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
See: *Protasparagus plumosus* (Baker) Oberm., *Protasparagus setaceus* (Kunth) Oberm.
 Weed - 1 - 2A - 5

Asparagus sprengeri Regel
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
= *Asparagus aethiopicus* L.
 Weed - 5

Asparagus stipularis Forssk.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed

Asparagus tenuifolius Lam.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
 Weed

Asparagus umbellatus Link
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus verticillatus L.
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae

Asparagus virgatus Baker
Liliaceae - Asparagaceae
See: *Protasparagus virgatus* (Baker) Oberm.
 Weed - N - 1A - 2A

A sobering statistic jumps out from this list. Of the 39 *Asparagus* species recorded in Australia 18 or 46 % are deemed to be weedy. That's a whole lot of trouble if they follow the same invasion pattern as bridal creeper !