



Boneseed Blitz Report 2017



Boneseed (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera* subsp. *monilifera*) is quite common in the Tamar Valley and is a Weed of National Significance.

It can be found in disturbed bushland, housing development blocks and in coastal vegetation. It can invade the understorey of bushland and competes with native plants and reduces biodiversity. Dense infestations can be a significant fire hazard.



Boneseed Blitz Report 2017

Over the months of September and October 2017, Tamar NRM promoted its annual Boneseed Blitz. Boneseed is a Weed of National Significance (WoNS). In the Tamar Region, Boneseed distribution is largely concentrated along the coastal and estuarine strip and the more densely populated urban and peri-urban areas.

Over past years the largest infestations have been identified in Trevallyn, Riverside, Deviot, Hillwood, Swan Bay/Windermere and at Low Head. There is the potential for Boneseed to become widespread across the entire Tamar Region if left uncontrolled.

This year's Blitz contained many elements which supported the objective of preventing Boneseed from establishing a major foothold in the region. In 2017 Tamar NRM:

- Continued with awareness raising activities (focus was Boneseed on private land);
- Worked with agencies and councils toward shared responsibility;
- Sourced latest Boneseed mapping and recorded reported sightings;
- Documented and reported private land infestations to compliance organisations;
- Promoted community group weed working bee days;
- Partnered with James Boag's and Landcare Tasmania on a Boag's Blitz day.
- Supplied weed treatment information;
- Supplied "Dabbers" for cut and paint treatment (cut stump);
- Followed up works through the Tamar NRM Works Teams (Green Army);
- Helped with plant identification;
- Undertook risk assessment and safety briefings for volunteers; and
- Integrated weed management approach consistent with Tamar Valley Weed Management Strategy.

Getting the maximum effectiveness, removal or treatment of Boneseed prior to seeding was the aim. Boneseed is easy to identify when it flowers from mid-spring to early summer. Normally growing as a bushy shrub up to 2 metres in height, the seeds are shed during summer and autumn. After a fire, large numbers of Boneseed seedlings may appear as the heat can crack the hard seed coat.

2017 Community Support:

The community volunteers mobilised by Tamar NRM for the annual Boneseed Blitz came from Landcare groups, family groups and "Friends of Groups" that collectively removed Boneseed from Council and Crown land and roadsides in the Launceston, West Tamar and George Town municipalities cutting down Boneseed plants and poisoning the stumps to prevent regrowth and pulling out seedlings from the sides of roads, parks and reserves and the foreshore along the Tamar River.

This year there was no dedicated "Blitz Day" but progress associations, friends groups and community Landcare groups undertook boneseed weeding as part of their usual scheduled monthly working bee days. Many reserves including Trevallyn, Punchbowl, Carr Villa, coastal strips of crown land and Parks & Wildlife areas all had Boneseed removed.

Table 1: *Community Groups supporting the "Boneseed Blitz" in 2017*

Bellingham Progress Association	East Tamar Landcare Group	Friends of Punchbowl Reserve
Friends of Trevallyn Reserve	Greens Beach Landcare	Hillwood Progress Association
Landcare Tasmania	Lilydale Landcare Group	Low Head Progress Association
Lulworth Progress Association	Tamar NRM (including Works Team)	West Tamar Landcare Group
Weymouth Progress Association		

* *Note: Organisers acknowledge the contribution of community groups and landholders who control Boneseed on an ongoing basis and are either unknown to us, and too numerous to list.*



Beaconsfield Blitz (Tuesday, 26th September):

Landcare Tasmania, Tamar NRM, West Tamar Landcare and West Tamar Council and about 40 staff from James Boag's "blitzed" a 5 ha patch of Boneseed at a native vegetation area west of Brooklyn Street on the outskirts of Beaconsfield. This was followed up by two days of work by the Tamar NRM Works Teams (see below). At the end of the Blitz only 5 large piles of boneseed cuttings remained, to be removed courtesy of West Tamar Council. The area was chosen because it is a Tasmanian threatened native vegetation community, *Eucalyptus amygdalina* forest and woodland on sandstone, only about 42,200 hectares remains Tasmania wide. The patch of bush is generally in good condition but there was a large volume of Boneseed present in the area. A big thank you to James Boag's for making their staff available during a factory maintenance day, it was fantastic to see what a group of 50 people could do in one day!



Above: Piles of Boneseed at Beaconsfield

Right: James Boag's workers at Beaconsfield "Blitz"



Tamar NRM Tamar and Meander Valley Natural Resource Management Green Army team (Tamar NRM Green Army Works Team)

The Green Army is an environmental conservation programme, managed by the Australian Government Department of the Environment. The Tamar NRM Green Army Works Team spent a week undertaking Boneseed removal from a number of areas within the Tamar. This year the focus of the works team was to revisit the foreshore reserve in Swan Bay and follow up after the Boag's Blitz at Beaconsfield.

The Swan Bay site was identified by local residents in 2016, where a large amount of Boneseed had been found. This site had previously been part of the Boneseed Blitz but the weed had re-established after a break in weeding events. Although blitzed last year, a large amount of Boneseed had germinated in 2017 and two days were spent removing Boneseed, Blackberry and Gorse from the 1.3km reserve on Windermere Rd.

The Tamar NRM Green Army Works Team also spent two days weeding the final Boneseed out of the Boag's Blitz site and expanding the area weeded into less infested bushland surrounding the original blitz site. A thorough walk through by the team ensured that all the Boneseed found was removed except for unsafe areas around abandoned mine shafts.

A blitz was also organised for Crown Land along Stony Brook Rd, Gravelly Beach, but poor weather and a high tide meant we had to postpone this work until 2018.



Table 2: 2017 Boneseed Blitz Sites, sightings, mapping and removal

Sites Visited 2017	Treatment Method	Notes
Brooklyn Street Beaconsfield	Hand pulling and cut and swab (Cut Stump)	5 Hectares treated. Included Cotoneaster, Pines and Spanish Heath
Swan Bay Reserve	Hand pulling and cut and swab (Cut Stump)	1.3 km of roadside reserve managed by Tamar Works Team
Punchbowl Reserve (above Punchbowl Road)	Hand pulling and cut and swab (Cut Stump)	Plants below the walking track removed. Some work above the track approaching private land.
Punchbowl Reserve	Hand pulling and cut and swab (Cut Stump)	Clear of Boneseed except along the school/development boundary
Glen Dhu Primary School Oval (Rose Lane)	Weed Education	Discover Ag Student (Weed education session on Boneseed 11 th October)
Cataract Gorge Reserve	Hand pulling and cut and swab (Cut Stump)	Regularly managed by City of Launceston
Public Reserves in Hillwood	Hand pulling and cut and swab (Cut Stump)	Tamar NRM contractor, Land Management North. Mapping by the Hillwood Progress Association.
Stony Brook Rd, Gravelly Beach		Treatment postponed due to bad weather and high tide.

** Note: Organisers acknowledge and appreciate the contribution of community groups and landholders who control Boneseed on an ongoing basis that we are unaware of and have therefore not included in this list.*

Tamar NRM Weeds Working Group:

Tamar NRM's Weeds Working Group comprises Tamar NRM; 3 Councils - City of Launceston, George Town and West Tamar; community and industry representatives; NRM North; DPIPWE; DIER (Dept. State Growth), TasTafe and Parks and Wildlife. The group aims to coordinate the efforts of organisations and groups managing weed issues within the Tamar Region. As such, we are interested in furthering the conversation on areas of shared responsibility to maximise effort and minimise the use of resources for us all, with particular emphasis on cooperation across land tenures.

Boneseed is a priority weed!

The Tamar Region Boneseed Eradication Strategy is being reviewed by Tamar NRM with support of the Tamar NRM Weeds Working Group. In 2017 our weeds working group made a strong connection with the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association weeds working group by having representatives attending each other's meetings. Greater co-operation and wider promotion of activities is flowing from the interaction.

Compliance and Legislation:

Administration of weed legislation is the responsibility of State and Local Government. The *Weed Management Act 1999* is the principle legislation concerned with the management of declared weeds in Tasmania. For further information on this legislation please refer to the following links: <http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/index.w3p>

Under the Act it is necessary for declared weeds such as Boneseed to have a documented Weed Management Plan. The Weed Management Plan for Boneseed can be found at the following link: <http://dpiuwe.tas.gov.au/invasive-species/weeds/weeds-index/weeds-index-declared-weeds/boneseed>

The low level of enforcement of WONS compliance remains a major obstacle in the fight against Boneseed. While councils and agencies do their best in resourcing of these activities, enforcement to ensure landholders and home owners meet their obligations falls short of the actual need.

Promotion

- Presentation to West Tamar, City of Launceston and George Town Council elected members.
- Media Release - August 2017.
- Information uploaded to Tamar NRM Website and Facebook pages August 2017.
- Notice of the Blitz in the Tamar NRM newsletter "Naturally Yours" distributed in September 2017 to over 1,000.
- Boneseed Blitz flyers and programs distributed (hard copy or via email) to all Landcare and "Friends" groups within the Tamar region, the Weeds Working Group as well as other interested parties.
- Promotion to James Boags workers and Beaconsfield residents.

Conclusion

Tamar NRM, in conjunction with three councils (City of Launceston, George Town and West Tamar), have a long history of positive and proactive weed activity and management characterised by community engagement, on-ground action, education and the use of best practice support tools. Local Government is at the forefront of weed management. It is clear the only way to combat weeds is through a combined strategic approach involving all land managers and the community.

The 2017 Boneseed Blitz demonstrated that this weed control program is working and worth pursuing in future years. Like the successful Ragwort Raid, mobilising the community and coordinating effort across agencies is a cost effective delivery model that gets results. While it is not possible for us to report the full extent of Boneseed removal over spring or to know the numbers of landholders and community involved, anecdotally we know that there are a large number of residents from our municipalities who clean roadsides and adjoining public lands of weeds like Boneseed. Many of these people have often started as "Boneseed Blitz" or "Ragwort Raid" participants. They have learnt the skills and then keep their lands and other areas clear on their own initiative, even when not involved in an organised event.

While eradication of Boneseed from the Tamar Valley is becoming increasingly unlikely, localised eradication from specific areas (e.g. coastal zone) is still possible. Our objective remains the prevention of Boneseed establishing a major foot hold in the region and to prevent having to deal with the consequences of impacts on bushland biodiversity, as a fire hazard and impacting on agriculture.

The Boneseed Blitz is a community partnership which builds capacity and awareness. It builds community confidence that we can manage weeds and conviction that "something can be done!".



Beaconsfield before and after the Boag's Boneseed Blitz, September 2017.

Further information on Boneseed available from DPIPWE:

<http://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/invasive-species/weeds/weeds-index/weeds-index-declared-weeds/boneseed/boneseed-control-guide>

Tamar Valley Weeds Strategy:

<http://www.weeds.asn.au/>

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