

WEED ALERT

ACACIA NILOTICA HAS REACHED THE KIMBERLEY!



ONE of pastoral Australia's worst weeds, *Acacia nilotica* (Prickly Acacia), has been discovered growing just inside WA, on the border with the Northern Territory. It forms an umbrella-shaped small tree, and has pairs of thorns up to 10 cm long.

A. nilotica was promoted extensively in Queensland in the 1890s as a shade and ornamental tree, especially to be planted around water points, where heavy cattle grazing pressure had eliminated the local shrubs. No-one seemed to appreciate that a plant grown because its foliage is not eaten by stock is likely to eventually become a weed! Currently it is estimated to infest more than 7 million ha, mostly in Qld but also in the NT.

The plant does produce protein-rich pods, eaten by cattle in drought situations, and viable seeds are dispersed in cattle manure. Perhaps this is how it has reached WA, in the droppings falling off a stock transporter?

Whether you live in the Kimberley, or are just visiting, keep an eye out for this plant. There is only one native it could be confused with, *A. farnesiana*, and plants in undisturbed sites are likely to be this. But to be sure, collect a specimen of anything suspicious and take it to an AgWA or the Department's office for ID. Specific contact: Noel Wilson, AgWA Kununurra, 9166 4047.

UTE GUIDE "SOUTHERN WEEDS AND THEIR CONTROL"

SOUTH COAST readers - if you haven't already got a copy of this booklet, reach for your phone now! Written by weed researcher John Moore (AgWA) and taxonomist Judy Wheeler (the Department) it gives clear and practical ID and control advice for weeds in both agricultural and environmental situations.

John recently was awarded the Council of Australian Weed Science Societies medal for leadership, for his outstanding contribution to weed management and research over the past 25 years. A well-deserved award - ask him, eg, about his computer programmes to help farm weed management!

Contact: John Moore on 9892 8476.

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY WEED AND PEST CONTROL

Theo Nabban

THE Department of Agriculture manages an NHT project called *Integration and Coordination of Weed and Pest Control* (ends June 2003) which supports and facilitates the formation and function of community groups leading to on-ground action in managing pests and weeds. The project assists both formal (LCDCs, Shire-based groups, Bushcarers etc) and informal groups (landholders and their neighbours) in the following ways:

- ▶ sources information and technical expertise on weed management i.e. local contacts, experts, results of weed trials, methods of weed control etc.,
- ▶ brokers training in weed control and management practices,
- ▶ provides information on simple and effective equipment to use in weed control, possible loan of equipment,
- ▶ networks with other local groups or neighbouring weed action groups,
- ▶ advises on weed mapping,
- ▶ assists groups move from planning to action (prioritising weeds for action, facilitating action plans),
- ▶ point of contact to involve other stakeholders (Shires, government agencies etc).

This project supports community/group action for both declared (agricultural) and environmental weeds & pests. It does not provide individual or one-to-one support. Regional coordinators have a role within the project to assist communities to set up Action Groups or to use existing structures (LCDCs, Shires, Regional NRM Groups) to manage weed and pest control, planning and action. They act as the avenue that groups would use for facilitation, information and the bringing in of additional expertise and resources that they require to get the results they want.

Contact details for Regional Community Weed and Pest Coordinators:

- for **Peel & South West & State wide** project manager. Theo Nabban, AgWA, Bunbury. Ph: 97 806 270; Fax: 97 806 136; email: tnabben@agric.wa.gov.au
- for **Kimberley & Northern Rangelands** - Noel Wilson, AgWA, Kununurra. Ph: 9166 4047; Fax: 9166 4067; email: nwilson@agric.wa.gov.au
- for **Central Agricultural & for Northern Agricultural** (includes most of the central Wheatbelt, including Gingin), Sam Giles, AgWA, Northam. Ph: 9690 2144; Fax: 9622 1902; email: sgiles@agric.wa.gov.au
- for **Great Southern & Esperance** - Graham Blacklock, Community Agricultural Centre, Kojonup. Ph: 9831 1997; Fax: 9831 1990; email: gblacklock@agric.wa.gov.au