



MOGGILL CREEK CATCHMENT GROUP

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore. 4069

Anzac Tree Daisy Threat in Moggill Creek Catchment

Adrian Webb September 2017

Landscapes within Moggill Creek Catchment and neighboring catchments have very high biodiversity, and form part of important habitat corridors between the Brisbane river and the conservation reserves of the D'Aguilar Range National Park. These natural assets so close to a major city provide a buffer between the agricultural and urban zones and the very high value ecosystems of the D'Aguilar National Park and other listed conservation reserves.

Loss of biodiversity through invasive exotic weed species is one of the most serious forms of degradation to the ecosystems of the catchment. Restoring the effects of degradation usually takes a long time, is nearly always difficult to achieve and will generally occur through incremental changes involving constant on ground action by landholders.

Another exotic threat

The latest exotic weed to be assessed as a serious threat to our ecosystems is *Montanoa hibiscifolia* known as Anzac tree daisy. Several infestations have been identified in the upper Wonga creek and Gold creek sub-catchments, and about one kilometer downstream of Upper Brookfield school. Anzac tree daisy is a native of Central America and was introduced to Far North Queensland as a garden plant. It grows rapidly and invades rainforest margins, gullies, disturbed areas and road embankments (Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, 2010).

A small infestation was identified by a BCC officer in the upper Wonga creek sub catchment in the sclerophyll forest in the mid 1970's. Subsequently several infestations were noted in the dry rainforests of the sub-catchments but not recognised as a major threat to our ecosystems. Approximately 4 years ago several infestations in the upper part of Wonga creek sub-catchment were assessed as being a potential threat to all the ecosystems in the sub catchment, and management was commenced. Currently infestations are being managed by several landholders, and SEQ Water officers are treating an infestation on the catchment divide in the Gold Creek Water Reserve.

Anzac tree daisy is now well established across the upper catchment and has moved into the gullies and Wonga creek itself; It has become a mono-culture in several of the dry gullies and has invaded nearby regenerating dry rainforest. There is a lack of readily available information for managing this weed in our environment, but early indications are that cutting and removal, or killing by basal bark spraying with herbicides are effective in removing the initial infestations. At least 2 follow up spraying of seedlings is required to get some control before attempting to revegetate.

The plant is a prolific seeder and shows potential to be highly invasive in the riparian zones and fringes of the local dry rainforests. Some of the worst infestations in Wonga creek catchment are in drainage lines.

Invasion by Anzac tree daisy is a clear risk to a substantial proportion of our remnant forests, and it appears to be spreading rapidly. It seems to be well adapted to our environment and is easily missed until April - May when it is a mass of flowers. You can see a photo and facts about the weed on the MCCG website.

Our Response

In collaboration with BCC and SEQ Water, MCCG has secured funding from the State Government with the initial objective of reducing the immediate threats posed by Anzac tree daisy in the high biodiversity ecological assets in the Wonga creek and Gold creek sub catchments at an early stage before it becomes much more difficult to manage. Work has commenced already in the Wonga creek headwaters. Parallel with on-ground work, a communication program has commenced to alert landholders and other stakeholders of this relatively new threat to the ecosystems of the catchment and nearby conservation reserves. In addition, a process is underway to identify the distribution of the Anzac tree daisy in the Moggill creek catchment.

Activities

MGCC will work with landholders and BCC in a concerted effort to manage the Anzac tree daisy infestations on properties on both sides of Wonga creek downstream to the junction with Moggill Creek in the next 12 months.

What can you do?

1. look around your property to see if you have any plants that look like the one in the Biosecurity Queensland fact sheet (attached).
2. If you are uncertain about identification seek advice from the following people:
 - Land for Wildlife Officer, Cody Hochen 0435 961 503
 - Richard Tumman at the end of Savages Rd. phone 33742504
 - Gordon Wilkinson at the end of Savages Rd. phone 33741576
 - Bryan Hacker, Gap Creek Rd. phone 33741468
 - Adrian Webb 65 Savages Rd. phone 33741407; 0412 672 283
3. The Biosecurity Queensland fact sheet gives information about the herbicides that may be used to treat the weed. If you need more advice contact any of the people listed above.

**IF YOU VALUE YOUR ECOSYSTEMS
PLEASE TAKE SOME ACTION**