WEED FACTS

FACT SHEET

Sutherland Shire COUNCIL

Cotoneaster glycophylla COTONEASTER

SEPTEMBER 2008

There are several species in this family. *Cotoneaster glycophylla* is the most common species and greatest threat to native bushland in Sutherland Shire.

DESCRIPTION

A tall shrub or small tree, reaching 3 or more metres high. Cotoneaster has long arching branches. Branches are covered in small dark green elliptical hairless leaves, 1.4 to 4 cm wide and 3 to 8 cm long. From October to January small white/pink clusters of flowers appear. Fruit takes the form of small round berries that mature to orange or red either singly or in clusters on the stems.

EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Cotoneaster invades the understorey of most Australian bushland. The long arching branches and stems of the Cotoneaster suppress surrounding native plants by covering them from sunlight. Cotoneaster is still a common plant found in gardens as an ornamental.

With the ability to produce fruit and flowers abundantly, the continued spread of seeds from gardens ensures large numbers of Cotoneaster plants are found scattered throughout areas of native bushland.

HABITAT

Cotoneaster can tolerate semi shade environments and can grow in a variety of habitats. Cotoneaster has naturalised in gullies, heathland, lowland grassland, freshwater wetlands, sclerophyll forest and riparian vegetation. The plant also thrives near urban areas in coastal communities, wastelands, along roadsides, in open clay soils and rocky stream banks.

Leaves and berries of Cotoneaster.
Source: Sutherland Shire Council

ORIGIN AND DISTRIBUTION

Originating in China, Cotoneaster was readily used as an ornamental. Dispersion occurs through the consumption of berries by birds, or the berries are washed down gullies and watercourses. Large populations can be seen growing along the banks of creeks and other watercourses.

DECLARATION

Cotoneaster is an environmental weed in Sutherland Shire. However, it is still important that environmental weeds be destroyed, as they can also affect human health, or can be invasive in the natural environment killing the native flora and reducing the natural biodiversity. Native animals may also be affected due to the loss of their natural habitat.

CONTROL

Manual removal when young. For mature plants herbicide is to be used. Treat the plants with undiluted Glyphosate, using the Scrape and Paint technique. Wait for plant to defoliate and remove above ground parts.

A semi mature plant.
Source: Sutherland Shire Council

For further information contact
Bushcare or Greenweb Units
on 02 9710 0333

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