

Hunter Region Priority Weed

# Black locust

Forms impenetrable thickets



Management guide



In NSW, weeds are regulated by the *NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015*. All land managers have a **General Biosecurity Duty** to contain the spread of weeds.

**“General Biosecurity Duty means that any person dealing with plant matter must take measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate the biosecurity risk (as far as is reasonably practicable).”**

**The Regional priority for Black locust is to increase knowledge and awareness of this weed species. In order to achieve this Land Managers are asked to learn what it looks like and undertake activities in line with the General Biosecurity Duty.**

For further information contact your local Biosecurity (Weeds) Officer via [Hunter Regional Weeds](#) or visit [NSW WeedWise](#)

## Impacts

Black locust is a tall, spiny deciduous tree.

- It is spread by vigorous suckers, especially following soil or root disturbance, or stem damage.
  - Suckers may appear for a long time after tree removal if tree is not killed first.
  - Sucker growth can form dense thickets that exclude native vegetation.
  - Thickets create a barrier to stock movement and access to water.
  - Also spreads by seeds.
  - May be spread by planting.
- Black locust is toxic to humans and can cause discomfort and irritation, but is not life-threatening.
  - All parts of the plant are poisonous, especially the pods, seeds, bark and leaves.
  - It can cause dizziness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, convulsions and drowsiness.
  - What to do if poisoning occurs:
    - If the patient is unconscious, unresponsive or having difficulty breathing dial 000.
    - If the patient is conscious and responsive call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 or your doctor.

## Management

Herbicide treatment is the best form of management of mature stands.

- Cut stump, basal bark, stem injection are viable methods. The aim is to limit coppice growth and suckering.
  - For best results, basal bark application of herbicides should be done to live standing trees when trees are small and thin-barked 15cm diameter or less.
  - Thoroughly wet all basal bark areas, including crown buds and ground sprouts. A thorough spraying that includes spraying until run-off at the ground line is noticed is necessary to hinder re-sprouting. Applications in periods of dry weather will aid in root control.
- In general, foliar spray application of herbicides should not be used in high quality areas because of potential damage to non-target plants.
  - Herbicide application to cut stumps or cut surfaces is preferred in high quality natural areas to minimize damage to non-target plants.
  - Regrowth and suckers may be sprayed when they are about 500 mm tall, in appropriate areas.
  - Regrowth needs to be monitored and removed rapidly to exhaust the original root system.
  - Physical or mechanical control is not recommended.
  - Black locust does not tolerate shade.
  - Plant tall growing native species as competition for light.

# Identification



Mature Black locust in bloom.  
*Photo: Per Verdonk, flickr.com*



Detail of leaves. *Photo: James H Miller  
USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org*



Black locust flowers and fruit. Flowers are similar to Wisteria flowers. *Photo: Bastus917, flickr.com*



Short, sturdy spines are found along the stems and trunk.  
*Photo: T Inkson*



Black locust Thicket. *Photo: T Inkson*

# Management Calendar

The calendar below outlines the management approach for a typical year.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Growth stage	Seed set, suckering possible.				Drops leaves with cold temperatures				Flowering, suckering most likely, seed germination			
Action	Best time for herbicide control of suckers by spraying. Basal bark application on live standing trees.								Possible but sub-optimal time for herbicide control			
					Cut stump treatment best results late summer, autumn through to dormant stages.							

Recommended control options may vary according to your area. There are experienced professional Biosecurity (Weeds) Officers based in each Local Government Area who have local knowledge and can provide expert advice for your weed management situation. Contact your expert Biosecurity (Weeds) Officer at your local Council or at **Hunter Regional Weeds**.

Herbicide control options for all areas in NSW, including current herbicide registrations, are available for Black locust at **NSW WeedWise**.

*Remember that all herbicide must be used and handled in accordance with the label or permit.*

<https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Blacklocust>



Get the WeedWise app

## Further information

For further information on how to meet your General Biosecurity Duty on your property, your best source is the expert Weeds Officer at your local Council or via Hunter Regional Weeds.

**Contact Hunter Regional Weeds**

[www.hunterregionalweeds.net.au](http://www.hunterregionalweeds.net.au)

**Hunter Local Land Services**

[www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/hunter](http://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/hunter)

**NSW Weed Wise**

[www.weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au)

