

Hunter Region Priority Weed

Cockspur coral tree

From garden ornamental to bushland invader



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 Cockspur coral tree is as a species of concern in the Hunter.

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

Impacts

Cockspur coral tree is a deciduous shrub or tree to 10 m high. It is potentially a major weed of waterways and floodplain areas.

- It has been cultivated as an ornamental plant but has escaped to become an emerging environmental weed.
- It is becoming naturalised along waterways, in swamps and wetlands, and in urban bushland in coastal areas.

- May have the potential to form pure stands in low-lying wetland areas and floodplains.
- Infestations become more obvious during flowering.
- Cockspur coral trees have cone-shaped prickles on the trunks, branches and stems.
- Lose their leaves completely over winter.
- Spreads by seed or branches and pieces of stems that take root, and dumped garden waste.
- Dispersed by stream flows and floodwaters.

Management

- Chemical methods including cut stump, stem injection can be effective.
- Chemical application should be undertaken with care around waterways.
- Manage garden waste carefully to ensure weeds do not spread by your actions.
- Monitor areas with known infestations for spread.
- Early control of potential weeds can reduce future impact and costs.
- Several other species of coral trees (*Erythrina spp.*), some of which are native, can be confused with Cockspur coral tree. Seek advice for correct identification if unsure.

Identification



Cockspur coral tree. *Photo: NSW DPI*



A mature cockspur coral tree in full flower. *Photo: Elissa van Oosterhout*



Cockspur coral tree spur. *Photo: NSW DPI*



Cockspur coral tree growing near water. *Photo: NSW DPI*



Cockspur coral tree flowers (Left and right). *Photo: NSW DPI*

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	Flowering								Flowering			
						Drops leaves with cold temperatures			Growth stage			
Action	Best time for herbicide control								Best time for herbicide control			

Recommended control options may vary according to your area. There are experienced professional Biosecurity (Weeds) Officer 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 Cockspur coral 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/CockspurCoralTree>



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

Hunter Local Land Services

www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/hunter

NSW Weed Wise

www.weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au

