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Kimberley Rangelands Biosecurity Association Invasive Species Activity Report 2016/17

Large Feral Herbivores

The Kimberley Rangelands Biosecurity Association (KRBA) has an annual Large Feral Herbivore culling program that includes feral donkeys, horses and camels with other animals such as water buffalo and pigs targeted when located. The program focusses primarily on donkeys, using the radio telemetry technique with horses and camels culled opportunistically during tracking. Currently there are 135 active collars throughout the region.

In 2016/17 due to DAFWA's limited capacity to provide shooters there was only a total of two runs in the West Kimberley, North Kimberley, and the Halls Creek areas. Results of animals culled on those runs are as follows –

Donkeys	Horses	Camels	Pigs
350	614	nil	nil

It is recognised by the KRPG that land managers also contribute to controlling feral herbivores with both opportunistic and planned culling programs of their own however no figures of those programs are available.

No aerial shooting operations were carried out over Department of Parks and Wildlife managed land by the KRBA. However Department of Parks and Wildlife did undertake its own management shoot over the Drysdale National Park and the Ord River Regeneration area.

Wild Dogs

The KRBA runs two aerial baiting programs a year to support the individual ground baiting programs run by individual pastoral stations. They are usually programed for April and October to avoid the wet season. In 2016/17 both runs dropped baits on over 30 pastoral stations across the Kimberley.

Prickly Acacia

Two control programs were carried out on the 10,578 hectare Nulla-Nulla site in partnership with Ord Land and Water over the 2015/16 wet season. In total 426 plants were controlled a slight increase on the previous year.

Mesquite

Nicholson Station: Two control programs were carried out on the 10,754 hectare site in partnership with Ord Land and Water over the 2016/17 wet

season. In total of 999 plants were controlled, a slight increase on the previous year.

No control was carried out on Yeeda or Thangoo Station.

Rubber vine (*Cryptostegia grandiflora*)

Rubber vine control in the Kimberley is split between two regional locations, one in the East Kimberley and the other in the west. Both programs run independently of the other with separate steering groups overseeing the planning and work carried out. The KRBA provides funding to both programs and additional in-kind support for the East Kimberley program. Other partner organisations also provide funding and in-kind contributions such as personnel to carry out the control and survey work.

East Kimberley: Rubber vine has been located at three locations in the East Kimberley – Oombulgurri, the Ord and Bow Rivers upstream of Lake Argyle and Limestone Creek adjacent to the Ord/Bow locations. A total of 12 field trips were carried out over the 2017 dry season covering 667 hectares, an increase of 287 hectares as a result of new satellite infestations found as a result of the increased surveillance for this year. A total of 11,839 plants treated.

An extensive aerial survey program was undertaken in March 2016 covering 46,000 hectares locating 251 seeders.

West Kimberley: The aerial camera survey (Aquila) has demonstrated a superior detection rate of plants at higher speeds. From 2018, aerial work will be optimized for camera speed, flying at 100 km/hour halving helicopter costs. 21,500 hectares was searched at 50-metre spacing with observer's detecting 35 flowering vines (all controlled). A further 19 vines were found in Aquila images. Ground crews searched 2,600 hectares at 10 and 15-metre spacing in 140 ground person days. 25 flowering rubber vine (only 3 previously seeded), 707 adult, 167 juvenile and 185 seedlings were destroyed.

Weed subsidies

Weed subsidies were paid out to a number of pastoral stations for the control of declared weeds on properties.