Weed control : Watsonia, Onehunga weed, Western Australia

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WATSONIA

THIS perennial bulbous species only makes active growth during the winter period. Cultural methods including rotary hoeing give good control, while grazing stock, particularly cattle, prevent the spread of Watsonia into pasture paddocks.

Burning the topgrowth has no effect on the bulbs and these will make normal growth during the following winter.

Watsonia can be readily controlled by spraying with a solution containing D.P.A. (sodium dichloropropionate). A suitable mixture is made by dissolving 2 oz. of D.P.A. in 1 gallon of water; this is sufficient to treat 25 square yards. The addition of a small quantity of wetting agent to the solution helps the chemical stick to the leaf.

Best results are obtained if the spraying is undertaken during July and early August. Little effect of the treatment is seen in the first six weeks but the following year no growth from the bulbs will occur.

ONEHUNGA WEED

DURING the period September to December a flood of enquiries is received concerning a weed which grows in lawns and has a spiny fruit. This is onehunga weed, which is a winter growing annual. Once the fruit is formed little can be done to overcome the problem. However, if the infested area is sprayed during the winter the plants are readily killed before the flowering stage is reached.

Onehunga, along with other weeds such as flat weed, fleabane, starwort and annual clovers, can be controlled by spraying with a solution containing 2,4-D. A suitable mixture is made by dissolving 1½ fluid ounces of 40 per cent. 2,4-D amine in 3 gallons of water; this is sufficient to treat 100 square yards.

Any spray equipment used should be thoroughly washed immediately after use to prevent contamination.

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