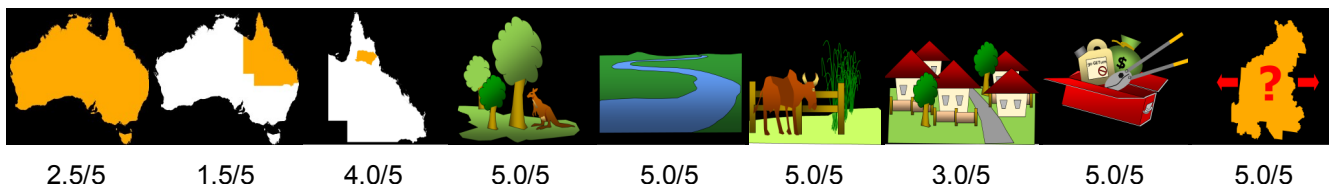


Bellyache Bush *Jatropha gossypifolia*

National priority State priority Previous local Conservation Water resources Agriculture and industry Community and residential Feasibility of control Current extent

Priority



Details

Description A squat, thick stemmed shrub 2.4–4m tall. Seedlings are single stemmed with deeply divided purple leaves. Mature leaves are brighter green with up to five lobes and coarse, dark brown hairs on the margins. Small, red flowers are followed by green, fleshy pods. Bellyache Bush is sometimes confused with Castor Oil Plant, which is taller and has seven to nine lobes that are pointed rather than rounded (see photos below).

Distribution An isolated infestation is present on Return Creek, upstream of Mount Garnet.

Impacts Bellyache Bush fruits are poisonous to humans and livestock. When eaten they can cause gastroenteritis and sometimes death. Infestations of Bellyache Bush can form a dense, impenetrable understorey that has a devastating impact on rangeland river systems and pastures.

Key projects Tablelands Regional Council continues to work with Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy to monitor outbreaks on unallocated State land and with Mareeba Shire Council at Emu Creek, the Upper Walsh River and the top of the Staaten River catchment, south of Highbury Station.

Background

Bellyache Bush is a weed of national significance. It outcompetes native vegetation, reduces pasture growth and has taken over extensive sections of river frontage, reducing biodiversity and increasing mustering costs. Bellyache Bush fruits are poisonous and can lead to death of some animals. In times of severe drought many stock deaths have been reported. All parts of the plant are poisonous to humans. Bellyache Bush has a relatively long seed life and requires ongoing monitoring and control to prevent new seed production.

During the dry season plants are often leafless and can be difficult to detect. Seedlings are short, with asparagus-like stems that are not easy to see amongst other vegetation. Frequent checking of known locations is an essential strategy to locate all plants before they reproduce.

Bellyache Bush can spread along watercourses, and by cattle, machinery and raw materials from infested areas. Landholders downstream of the Return Creek (Mt. Garnet) infestation should be on the lookout and report new or established infestations.

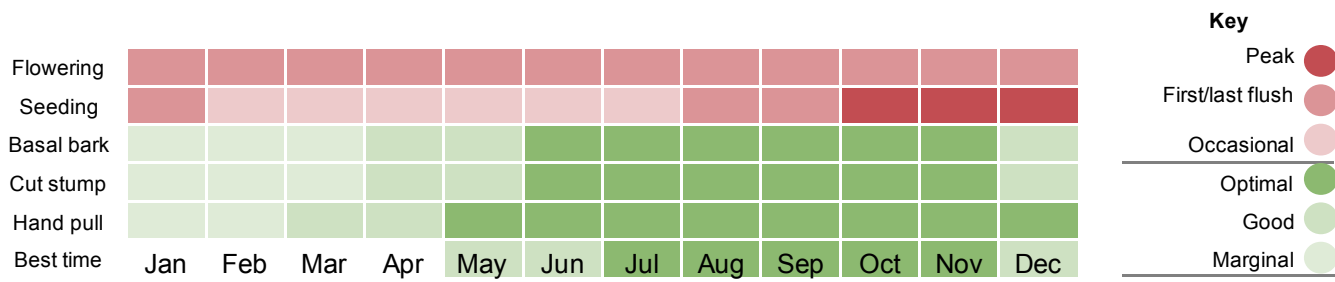


Castor Oil Plant leaf.



Bellyache Bush leaf.

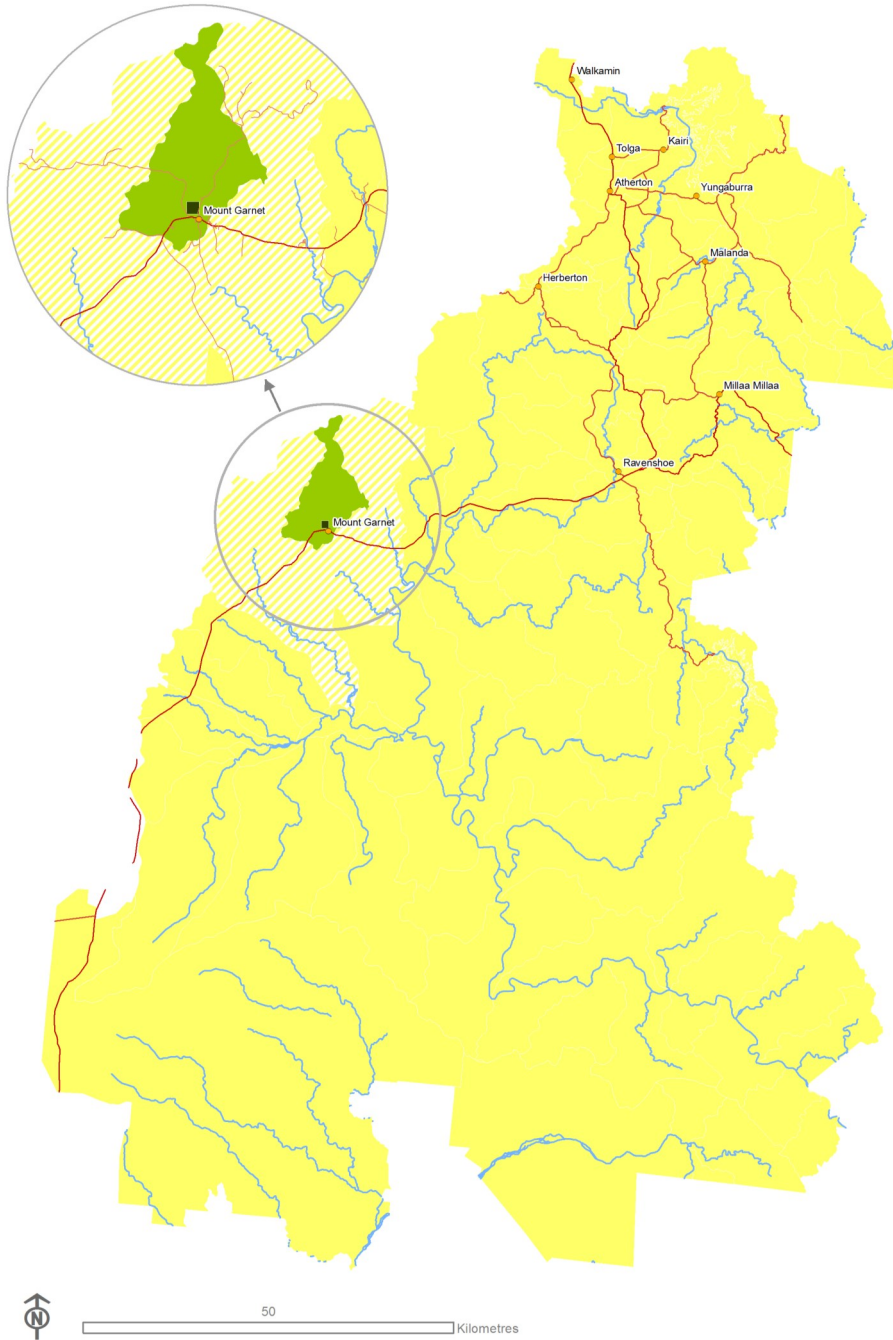
Control calendar



For more information on using this biosecurity action plan fact sheet, and further information on control tools, refer to the [Tablelands Biosecurity Plan](#) available at trc.qld.gov.au and customer service centres.

1300 362 242 (24hr Customer Service)
 info@trc.qld.gov.au
 www.trc.qld.gov.au
 PO Box 573, Atherton QLD 4883
 Tablelands Regional Council

Customer Service Centres in Atherton, Herberton, Malanda & Ravenshoe



In the delimitation zone

In the prevention zone

In the eradication zone

What is my biosecurity obligation?

Report any suspected outbreaks or detections to Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) on 1300 362 242.

Bellyache Bush is a restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. It is an offence to move, share, give away or sell this plant and to move or sell contaminated produce or soil. Spell stock for at least seven days prior to movement. Ensure machinery and vehicles moving from infested areas are free from plant material and soil. Report any suspected outbreaks or detections to TRC on 1300 362 242.

If your property has an active infestation you can assist the survey and control team by maintaining property access, and not moving soil or plant material from the infestation area. You should also work with TRC to develop and adhere to a biosecurity plan for your property.

Reduce risk and spread by managing plants adjoining property accesses and boundaries. Ensure all plants are controlled prior to flowering to prevent more seed from entering the system. Report any suspected outbreaks and detections to TRC on 1300 362 242.

Herb

Terrestrial

Perennial

Biosecurity Act Restricted matter category

2 Must be reported

3 Do not distribute

4 Do not move

5 Do not keep

6 Do not feed

Control



Spread

