

Victorian Weed Spotters

AGRICULTURE  VICTORIA



Overview

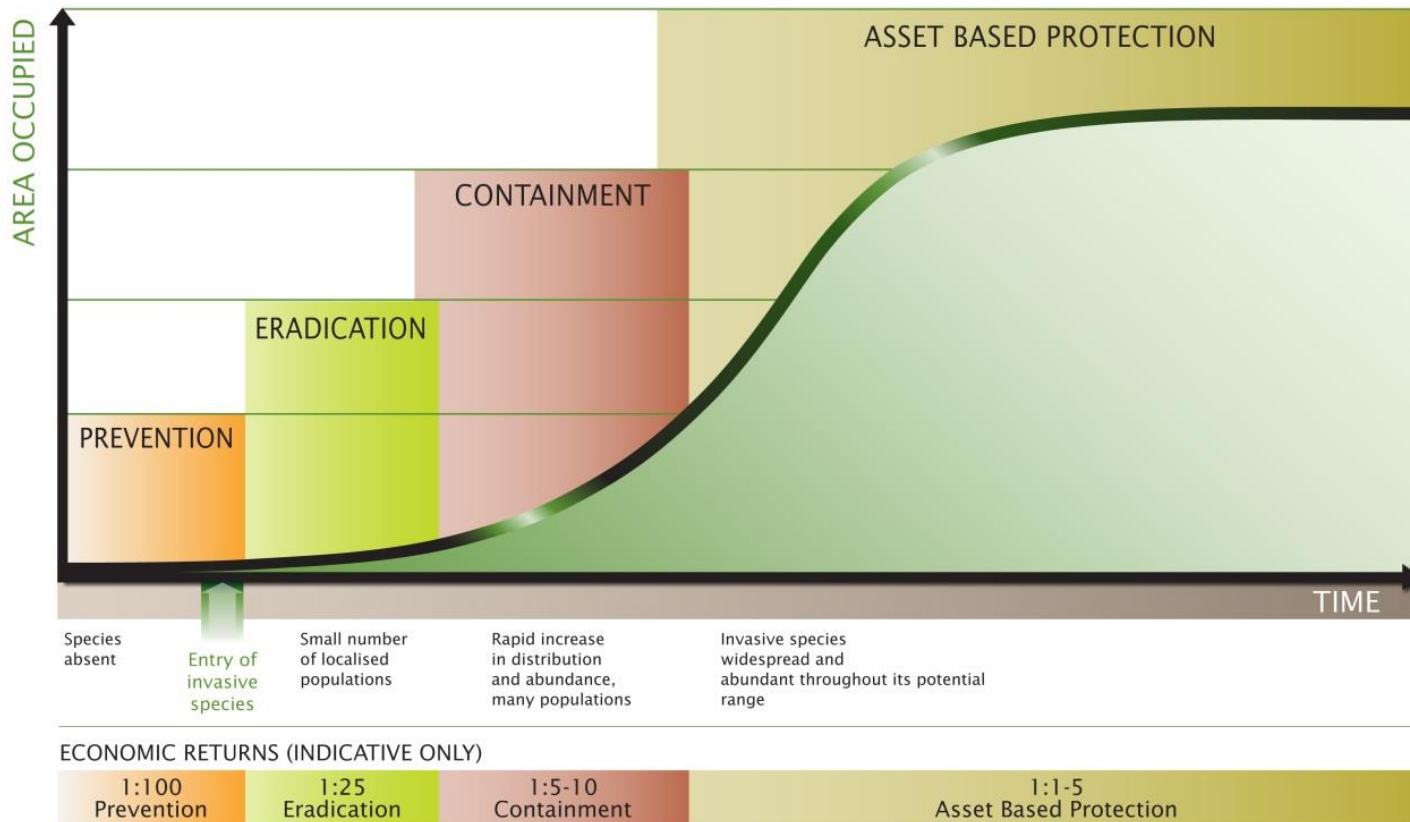
- Weed Spotters sits within the High Risk Invasive Plants program at Agriculture Victoria
- The program focuses on State prohibited weeds as the highest category of declared noxious weeds in Victoria under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP)
- State prohibited weeds either:
 - do not occur in Victoria or
 - are present in small numbers and can reasonably be expected to be eradicated



Agriculture Victoria Biosecurity Approach

GENERALISED INVASION CURVE SHOWING ACTIONS APPROPRIATE TO EACH STAGE

Version 1.0: 30 APR 2009



Early Detection: key to eradication

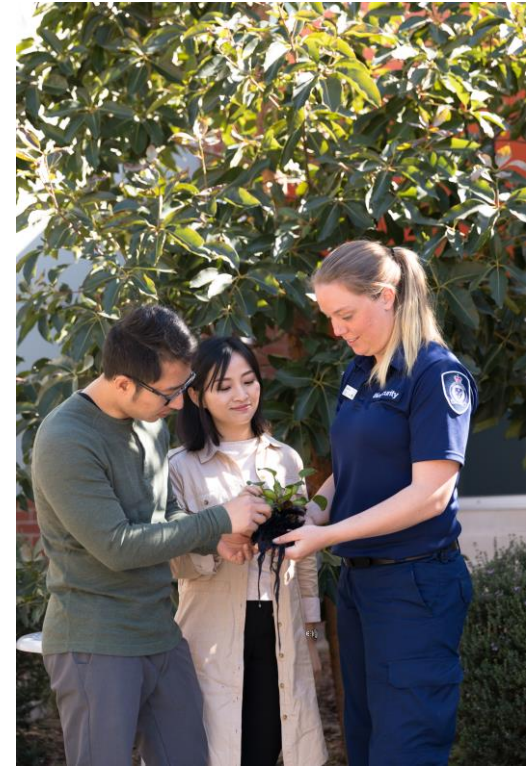
Made possible by Weed Spotters

1. Early detection – finding new infestations before they have established and spread too far
2. Delimitation – to determine the extent and where it may have spread to
3. Planned response – assess the site and species
4. Monitoring until eradicated – occurs regularly



Weed Spotters are asked to

- Be observant
- Look out for State prohibited weeds anywhere in Victoria including:
 - Private gardens.
 - Restaurants.
 - Markets.
 - Reserves.
 - Public gardens.
 - Waterways.
 - On-line market places.
- Report sightings to Agriculture Victoria immediately.



The reporting process

- Ask Weed Spotters to
 - report any suspect State prohibited weeds to Agriculture Victoria
 - take photos
 - record accurate information
 - mark location on a map or provide a street address
 - not destroy or remove the plant
 - send this information to weed.spotters@agriculture.vic.gov.au or call 136 186



Response to Weed Spotter reports

- Photos are usually sufficient to identify reports.
- If a State prohibited weed is identified, then a biosecurity officer will visit the site as soon as possible.
- Once identity is confirmed, the plants will be safely removed by biosecurity officers or a contractor as soon as possible.
- On-going monitoring will then occur for a number of years until the site is eradicated



Weed Spotter engagement

- Weed Spotters are supported by:
 - newsletter, three times per year
 - annual wall calendar
 - website
 - training, online and face to face
 - State prohibited weed ID cards



Weed Spotter time line – establishment of program

- 2006 - Officially launched and coordinator role appointed
- 2007 - Weed Spotters asked to look for a large list of species and volunteer numbers growing rapidly through training
- 2008 - Strategic recruitment plan developed to manage escalation and imbalance across the state and a focus on State prohibited weeds only
- 2010 - Recruitment aligned to target affiliations and training and communications products improved
- 2011 - Weed Spotter database and web site improved
- 2016 - Online training module developed

Key lessons

- Small group of target species to keep Weed Spotters focussed on the highest priorities
- Strategic Weed Spotter recruitment has resulted in a higher proportion of accurate reports
- Online training has allowed more people to access training with limited training resources and has allowed training to continue during the pandemic
- Live plant specimens are an invaluable training resource

Questions

For more information

[www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/
weedspotters](http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/weedspotters)

weed.spotters@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Thank you

Weed Spotter training session

