

Sallow Wattle – The Golden Invader

Fact and Information Sheet – Volume One

Home to more than one third of Victoria's flora, the National Heritage listed park's rich biodiversity is under threat from a rapidly spreading native plant species - the Sallow wattle. This plant does not naturally occur in the area and is behaving like a weed, threatening the survival of other important native species in the park.

About

Sallow Wattle (*Acacia longifolia*) is native to New South Wales however has been found to be invasive in some parts of Victoria. Unfortunately, northern sections of Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park are highly infested with over seven thousand hectares at risk. Control efforts are being made by Parks Victoria and Volunteers to control this invasive plant which will avoid further dispersion into the greater landscape.

Currently, Sallow Wattle control within the Grampians Landscape is funded by the Victorian Government's Biodiversity Response Planning program which is helping to ensure that Victoria's natural environment is healthy, valued and actively cared for. The aim of the control program is to reduce Sallow Wattle density below 30% cover to promote regeneration of native vegetation. Grampians National Park is home to one third of Victoria's floral diversity with over 75 orchid species.

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Sallow Wattle has formed dense woodlands suppressing the growth of these local floral species by out-competing them, threatening the incredible diversity within the park. Sallow Wattle reaches maturity at 18 months and can produce up to 11,500 seeds. The problem intensifies as fires, floods and other major disturbances to soil lead to mass germination.

Identification

It is important that surrounding neighbours of the national park can recognise this invasive plant to assist land managers avoid it spreading on their property. Sallow Wattle is recognised as a dense shrub that can grow into a three to ten-meter-high small tree but can also reach up to a ten-meter-wide tree. Its flowers are yellow, cylindrical and spike in late winter and spring. Its leaves are, unlike most other wattles, bright green, straight and point upwards, they are hardy and waxy to

touch. It has two to three prominent, elongated parallel veins. Simple control methods include pulling seedlings out by hand and making sure the root system is also removed. Larger plant trunks need to be cut at ground level, ensuring to cut below the lowest active bud especially on juvenile plants, otherwise there could be a risk of reshooting.



Image source: Parks Victoria

How You Can Help

Parks Victoria organise volunteer activities to help reduce the impact of this invasive plant and to provide opportunities for community members to connect with the local landscape. Two-hour long Volunteer sessions are delivered annually with visiting school groups contributing over 1,000 hours each year. Parks Victoria encourage school groups (Primary through to University) to contact the below staff members if they would like to be involved in the Sallow Wattle Control program. Several information sessions about how to be involved for the public will be delivered online and face to face in the coming months. Information about these sessions will be distributed through newsletters and the Parks Victoria website.

Contact

Enquires about the information sessions and volunteer activities please contact: hannah.auld@parks.vic.gov.au

Enquires about the Sallow Wattle control program please contact: marlenne.rodriguez@parks.vic.gov.au

Information about Grampians National Park please visit: www.parks.vic.gov.au