

Honey locust

(*Gleditsia triacanthos*)

Regional priority weed objective: Containment

Honey locust, a member of the Fabaceae family, is an extremely invasive species that can smother pastures and native vegetation. It has been known to cause injury to humans and livestock, and puncture car and tractor tyres, with its sharp spikes.

Honey locust is native to North Eastern America, introduced to Australia as a fodder tree for stock feed. It was also widely used as an ornamental plant.



Honey locust

Declaration and control

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These weeds are widely distributed in parts of this region. While broadscale elimination is not practical, minimisation of the biosecurity risk posed by these weeds is reasonably practicable.

Control methods

Refer to the **NSW Weed Control Handbook (7th edition; 2018)** available at Rous County Council, or the Industry & Investment website at:

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds/weed-control/management-guides/noxious-enviro-weed-control>

Description

Honey locust is a deciduous tree that can reach heights of 20-30m. Leaves are dark green, about 10cm long with around 20 opposite paired leaflets. In October and November it produces a creamy-yellow flower that develops into a 20-30cm long flat brown/black pod; each pod can contain up to 30 seeds. The plant reproduces prolifically and stock relish the legume's seed pods.

The trunk and limbs of the Honey locust tree are covered in very sharp needle-like spines that have been known to grow over 50mm in length.



Distribution

Scattered infestations of Honey locust can be found in Far North NSW, with heavier infestations near Tatham and isolated heavy infestations on the Richmond River, as well as parts of the Kyogle Shire.

Honey locust is also present in other areas of NSW and Queensland.

Invasive traits

Honey locust is an extremely drought tolerant, adaptable species that is free from disease and insect attack in Australia. Fast growing, it quickly establishes dense thickets that displace other species. Capable of reproducing very quickly, each seed pod contains 20-30 seeds and a mature Honey locust can produce hundreds of these seed pods each year.

Dispersal method

Seed is spread by:

- Grazing stock eating pods and passing seed in dung.
- Floodwater transporting floating pods.
- People planting it as an ornamental or for fodder.



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