

# Cockscomb coral tree

(*Erythrina crista-galli*)

**Regional priority weed objective: Containment**

Cockscomb coral tree (also known as Cockspur coral tree) is a deciduous shrub or tree from South America. It has been commonly grown in Australia as an ornamental plant, and has become invasive along waterways in coastal NSW north of Sydney.



Photo: K Curtis, RCC.

- Description:** A deciduous shrub or tree, usually 5-8m, but up to 10m high with cone-shaped prickles on trunks, branches and stems.
- Leaves:** Three leaflets, 3-6cm long and 2-5cm wide.
- Flowers:** Conspicuous scarlet to dark red flowers in large loose clusters at the tips of branches. Flowering occurs from spring to early autumn, and this is when infestations are most obvious.
- Fruit:** Sickle-shaped seed pods 8-22cm long, turning from green to dark brown or blackish as they mature. Pods contain 3-12 brown to black seeds, which are large, hard and slightly kidney-shaped.
- Dispersal:** Both by seed and vegetatively via pieces of branch or stem that take root in moist soil. Pods, seeds and stem pieces are readily carried by floodwaters into creeks and wetlands. Can also spread through dumped garden waste.
- Habitat:** Waterways, swamps and wetlands, and in urban bushland.

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## Declaration and control

### Regional priority weed objective: Containment

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.

The Cockscomb coral tree is a weed that could spread quickly in coastal areas, particularly along waterways and in wetlands. It has the potential to form dense, pure stands that can exclude native vegetation.

These trees can be removed mechanically or controlled with herbicide. Sites should be monitored so that regrowth can be controlled.

**Non-chemical options:** Physical removal is an option, always treat the remaining stump. Take care when removing the plant as all parts can potentially regrow.

Chemical and concentration	Rate	Comments
<b>Picloram</b> 44.7g/L + <b>Aminopyralid</b> 4.47g/L Vigilant II®	Undiluted	Cut stump application. Apply a 3-5mm layer of gel for stems less than 20mm. Apply 5mm layer on stems above 20mm.
<b>PER9907:</b>		
<b>Glyphosate</b> 360g/L Roundup®	1 part glyphosate to 1.5 parts water	Cut stump / drill / axe cut / inject.



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