

Still Creek  
Landcare

## STILL CREEK LANDCARE

## Look Out For Fireweed Now!

Fireweed arrived here in The Hills catchment well over 10 years ago and it's certainly made a home in our paddocks, roadsides and open spaces. For a plant that is easily controlled, it's a shame it's still here amongst us because it is Toxic!

Fireweed (*Senecio madagascarensis*) contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids in all parts of the plant throughout the plants lifecycle and the toxins do not diminish when the plant dies. The Alkaloids oxidise in the liver and builds up in animals over time. Horses and Cattle are particularly susceptible to poisoning. The damage to the liver is accumulative, irreversible and can ultimately lead to death.

Our paddocks and lawns might be brightened by Fireweed's Yellow flowers, but don't be deceived. Up to 30,000 seeds can come from a single plant, which is why it has become so wide spread. The plant is opportunistic and will grow and flower whenever the weather suits.

It's easy to control without weedicide. It's just a matter of removing Fireweed as it flowers by keeping your paddocks slashed or gardens lawns mown. It is easily pulled

by hand, just remember it's toxic and to dispose of it thoughtfully.

It is possible to stop the spread of this weed and help out our primary producers, stock owners and equestrian's. A little work now really pays off in the next season. I have personally applied these methods and witnessed the results. One good afternoon of work pulling the flowering plants and mowing the rest paid off with a 90% decrease the following seasons. I now find myself pulling Fireweed only around my property boundaries where it's exposed to neighbouring infestations.

We have chosen to live in a rural environment and even if we do not own grazing stock, as good neighbours we owe the people that make this district rural to keep their stock healthy.

This weed has an erect, branched growth of up to 70cm in height. Its main characteristic is the mass of small yellow daisy flowers about the size of a \$2 coin.

Fireweed can dominate pastures quickly, establishing in disturbed areas such as over-grazed pastures and along roadsides. Simple regular slashing or pulling Fireweed

by hand can halt its spread. However, once flowering commences seeds are viable, so dispose of all Flowering Fireweed by bagging it with your household refuse bin.

For more information, contact Nick on 9653 2056, [www.stillcreeklandcare.com.au](http://www.stillcreeklandcare.com.au) email [Stillcreeklandcare@inet.net.au](mailto:Stillcreeklandcare@inet.net.au) or Facebook



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