



Case studies

Peter and Janelle Cleary, 'Springlea' Warwick Qld.



PROPERTY DETAILS

Location: 25 kms west of Warwick, southern Queensland

Catchment: Greymare, Thanos and Lagoon Creeks, Condamine River catchment

Property area: 2,000 hectares

Main enterprises: Beef cattle, sheep, lucerne hay production, fodder crops

Where lippia is a problem: Pasture paddocks, floodplain areas



Peter Cleary with lippia in a waterway

(Photo by P. Crawford)

General information and lippia infestation

The Cleary's property is wholly contained within a catchment area covering a series of connecting blocks that run from the top of a hill down to the Condamine River floodplain. The property has primarily native pasture with a few small areas of introduced pasture.

Peter has observed lippia in the area for about twenty years and believes it was first carried onto his property by ducks and water birds, and then spread by cattle, farm machinery and floodwaters. Lippia now grows on all of the Cleary's blocks, and is even present on the higher sandy soil areas. It is most prolific on the two lower blocks with richer and heavier clay soils.

While it has only been a serious problem on his property for the past five years, other landholders in the area have had land severely affected by lippia for more than ten years, with stocking rates significantly reduced.





Cut-off line showing where Peter ran out of chemical. Inset – one month after spraying, showing dead lippia

(Photo by P. Crawford)

Methods of lippia management

Peter relies on herbicides to control lippia. He has sprayed in a systematic approach working in conjunction with his neighbours, focusing spraying at the top of the catchment first and then working down.

Peter boomsprays heavily infested areas of lippia and spot sprays smaller patches using a council Quick-spray unit with an eighty metre hose and automatic reel. The main chemical Peter has used in the past has been Agricrop Lantana® 600, but he has recently changed to Amicide® 625 2,4-D, due to it being much cheaper.

Peter believes it is important to spray when the lippia first starts growing after spring and summer rains, and observes that the chemical is most effective when lippia is actively growing. Peter also believes it is very important to really saturate the lippia when spraying and to wait until clovers and legumes have dropped seed before spraying, otherwise these species could be killed off.

After several years of spraying Peter has largely eradicated lippia on his upper blocks, where he has been concentrating his effort. He has also been spraying in some of the lower paddocks to prevent lippia becoming too strongly established.

Future control options

With his systematic approach of focusing on the top of the catchment first and then working down, Peter hopes to eventually rid his property of lippia. This will not be an easy process and will require persistence, but Peter believes the effort is worth it.

Peter will consider setting up a grazing exclusion area of a half a hectare or so in order to observe the effect of stock removal on the return of grasses following spraying.

