Siam weed
*Chromolaena odorata*

Siam weed is considered one of the world’s most invasive weeds. It has the potential to spread across northern Australia and down the eastern and western coastlines. Siam weed was first identified in Australia in 1994 as several large infestations along the Tully River and at Bingil Bay in Far North Queensland. Siam weed infestations have also been found in the Townsville, Mossman, Innot Hot Springs, Mount Garnet areas, and an isolated infestation of Siam weed has also been found near Rockhampton.

The grazing industry, agricultural production systems (particularly horticultural crops such as bananas, pawpaw and sugarcane) and forestry plantations are at risk. Siam weed also has the potential to seriously degrade large areas of the wet tropics, dry tropic savannah grasslands, subtropical and coastal regions, and ecologically important conservation areas.

**Description**

Young Siam weed looks similar to blue top or Billy goat weed (*Ageratum spp.*), but mature plants have a growth habit similar to Lantana (*Lantana camara*). Some graziers have referred to Siam weed as ‘White lantana’.

In the open, Siam weed grows as a dense tangling bush to 2–3m. However, it can scramble up trees to a height of 20m. Several stems develop from the crown of the plant. The root system is fibrous and shallow in most soils, and develops an enlargement at the junction of the stem and root, which is referred to as the basal ball.

Siam weed dies back in the dry season but re-shoots after rain. Due to the presence of the basal ball, regrowth also occurs rapidly after fire, slashing and inadequate or ineffective herbicide application.

**Management**

Physical removal of the basal/root ball is very effective and recommended for smaller infestations. However, it is extremely important to make sure the removed plant does not remain in contact with soil, as any contact will result in the plant re-shooting.

If you would like further information on weeds look at the A–Z Listing of Weeds at Queensland Government Website.

**Reference:** The State of Queensland, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, 2009, “PP49, Weed Busters Fact Sheet”. 

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**fact sheet**

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*(High Risk Weed)*

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