



Policy

vipers bugloss (*Echium vulgare*)

Background

Vipers bugloss (*Echium vulgare*) is a similar plant to salvation Jane (*E. plantagineum*) but can be easily distinguished by its narrow leaves without a conspicuous network of veins, and its blue flowers with all four stamens protruding beyond the petals (Toelken, 1986). It was introduced from Europe as a garden ornamental, and was first found in this State at Georgetown in 1893 (Kloot, 1986) but has not persisted there. It occurs in small patches near Clare, Mount Gambier and Millicent.

This species is a biennial or perennial. Unlike salvation Jane, which can grow as an annual in the extensive summer-drought regions of the State, it is restricted to areas with sufficient summer moisture to complete its life cycle. Also, it has a later flowering season which is interrupted by the summer water-stress period.

Vipers bugloss was proclaimed on schedule three under the Pest Plants Act in 1975 after a request from a Council in the south-east who had found a roadside infestation.

Discussion

Vipers bugloss has remained restricted to a few sites and has not become a significant weed in this State. No Animal and Plant Control Board had a control program specifically on this weed, although it was treated along with salvation Jane where the two species occur together. Biological control agents being introduced to reduce populations of salvation Jane will also feed on vipers bugloss

In Victoria it is also limited to a few high-rainfall areas and is of little agricultural significance (Parsons, 1973).

A general proclamation of all *Echium* species is not practicable, as the genus contains one serious weed but many valuable ornamental plants.

Co-ordinated Control Program

None.

Declaration

Vipers bugloss is not declared for any part of South Australia and no sections of the Act apply to it.

References

Kloot, P.M. (1986) Checklist of the Introduced Species Naturalised in South Australia. Department of Agriculture South Australia Technical Paper No.14.

Parsons, W.T. (1973) Noxious Weeds of Victoria. (Inkata Press: Melbourne).



Government of South Australia

Department of Water, Land and
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Toelken, H.R. (1986) Boraginaceae. In Jessop, J.P. & Toelken, H.R. (eds) Flora of South Australia 3. (Government Printer: Adelaide).