



Lowveld & Escarpment Fire Protection Association Newsletter

Issue 27

April 2018



Greetings,

We focus on alien invasives in this issue, none of which are as cute as this little guy. Johan Louw, the Nature Conservation Officer for Mbombela, fills us in on all we need to know about that pesky invader Lantana and we report back on the alien removal undertaken by the LEFPA team at Pro Gratia Learning Centre.



The LEFPA 2018 / 2019 membership rates are published on page 4. Please pay your fees when they are due, ensuring that you are eligible to access the resources provided by membership. Until next time.

SAGIC Training

The South African Green Industries Council (SAGIC) has set the dates for invasive species and herbicide training in 2018. The course consists of four modules:

Module 1:(Day 1) Identification & Legislation: Learn to identify invasive species, categories and understand the legislation.

Module 2: (Day 2) Directives & Control Plans: How to manage declarations, permits, pre-directives, directives and control plans.

Module 3: (Day 3) Theory: Herbicides & Control Methods: Introduction to herbicides and how to use them.

Module 4: (Day 4) Practical: Spraying Herbicides: A practical learning experience in the field with industry experts.

The **dates** and **venues** for training are:

Durbanville, Cape Town: 15, 16, 17 & 18 May 2018

Kloof, Durban: 22, 23, 24 & 25 May 2018

Edenvale, Johannesburg: 19, 20, 21 & 22 June 2018

Cost per module: R 935 (Including VAT) and **booking is essential** to confirm your place. Interested members can book by e-mailing training@sagic.co.za / invasives@sagic.co.za. An invoice containing the bank details for payment will then be sent to participants. There is also a 'get in touch' option on the SAGIC website that may be used for bookings.

Ridding Pro Gratia of Aliens

The LEFPA Mbombela team has been assisting Pro Gratia Learning Centre to clean up invasive alien vegetation at the school and will continue to do so as part of our community assistance projects. Mrs. Yulandi Jansma, Marketing Officer at Pro Gratia sent LEFPA a touching letter of gratitude, saying that LEFPA's contribution is a commitment to the



betterment of the community and a statement that learners with special needs have great potential.



Well done Bokkie and Bomber, the children were thrilled to have a warm hug from you.

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Alien Invasive Plants - Pretty but Deadly *Lantana camara*.

Johan Louw discusses an alien invasive plant originating in Central and South America but commonly found in the Lowveld - Lantana. Don't be fooled by the pretty pink and yellow clusters - this encroacher and invader is a poisonous killer!

IAP Species: *Lantana camara* (Scientific name) **Nemba Category:** 1b

Common names – Lantana, Bird's brandy; cherry pie; tick-berry (English), gewone lantana; gomdagga (Afrikaans), sumba (Shona); ubukhwebezane (isiZulu), ubutywala bentaka (isiXhosa)

Foliage: Deciduous perennial

Growth form: Woody Shrub

Precautions: Unripe berries are poisonous to humans. Leaves are poisonous to livestock. Can be a skin irritant.

Description:

Compact floriferous shrub or untidy scrambling shrub up to 2 m or higher; stems covered with short, stiff hairs, sometimes with thorns.

Leaves: dark green, paler below, rough, hairy, smelling strongly when crushed. **Flowers:** pink, red, crimson, orange, yellow or white in compact flat-topped heads, often with several colours in one head. **Fruits:** glossy green turning purplish-black

Where in South Africa is it a problem?

Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, North West.

How does it spread?

Seed is dispersed by wildlife, birds, baboons, monkeys and by flashfloods which deposit seeds downstream.

Why is it a problem?

Competes with and replaces indigenous plants. Allelopathic suppression of indigenous species interrupts regeneration processes and reduces biodiversity of natural ecosystems. Dense stands obstruct access and veldt utilization. Poisonous to humans and animals and responsible for livestock mortalities amounting to millions of Rands every year in South Africa. Reduces the grazing potential of the land. Invades forest and plantation margins, savanna, watercourses, roadsides and degraded or disturbed land.

Cultivated for:

Ornamental plants and hedging.

Alternatives to plant:

Natal bauhinia (*Bauhinia natalensis*), September bush (*Polygala myrtifolia*), plumbago (*Plumbago auriculata*), pink sage (*Orthosiphon labiatus*), wild pomegranate (*Burchellia bubalina*).

Control:

Each of the 50 variations have different susceptibilities to herbicides, making foliar operations hit and miss. Cut stump treatments are the most effective and therefore recommended as best practice.

Dense infestations: Left unchecked Lantana can form dense thickets but beneath the thick "canopy" there is often only a single stem to cut and treat. These dense infestations result in allelopathic suppression of other species, usually the ground is bare after clearing. Avoid treating these areas in the rainy season as the lack of ground cover could result in erosion on steep slopes or river banks. It may be necessary to assist natural vegetation recovery by reintroducing grass (if no adjacent seed source exists) and also stabilising soil with erosion barriers. Fire should also be used as a treatment in grassland areas. Post canopy weed control should be done in commercial areas adjacent to open areas which are being treated to prevent seed pollution.

Cut stump: Preferred treatment for all situations – stumps must be cut as low as possible.

Foliar spray: Because of the number of variants, foliar spray can be less effective, for this reason it is suggested that cut stump treatments be predominant method used as it appears to have results against all variants.

Hand Pulling: Only effective in Zululand where soils are sandy, seedlings small and there is low density, or after a lot of rain where the local soil conditions permit pulling of the entire root from the soil with ease.

Herbicide	Trade name	Rate:	Application method
Imazapyr 100g/l SL	Hatchet	200ml in 10l of water	Cut stump
	Eco-Imazapyr		
Floroxypyr/picloram 80/80 g/l ME	Plenum	150 ml in 10l of water (include wetter and dye)	Cut stump and foliar

Biocontrol is also available and a lot of bugs have been released on lantana already. The most recent biocontrol bugs were:

Species	Type	Year released
<i>Aceria lantanae</i>	Flower galler	2007
<i>Coeloccephapion camarae</i>	Petiole galler	2007
<i>Longitarsus bethae</i>	Root feeder	2007

References

Henderson, L. 2001. Alien Weeds and Invasive Plants. ARC. Paarl Printers, Cape Town.
 Management of Invasive Alien Plants. <http://www.arc.agric.za/arc-ppri/Documents/Agents%20released%20July%202016.pdf> (Accessed on 19/03/2018)
 Invasive Species of South Africa. *Lantana camara*. Available at: <http://www.invasives.org.za/component/k2/item/267-lantana-lantana-camara> (Accessed on 19/03/2018)



Firefighting at Home

Jaco Badenhorst continues to teach readers about fire safety where it is most relevant to most of us - in our homes. Please take a few minutes to read his article and share it with your family and domestic staff.

Big fires begin as little fires and if correctly dealt with immediately a great deal of damage may be prevented. Most of the time it's best to leave firefighting to the professionals but there are times when you can deal with small fires yourself, as long as you're certain that it's safe to do so. If you're going to suppress a fire, you need to learn how to do it correctly beforehand. Do it the wrong way and you could put yourself in danger and make things worse.

Fighting stove-top fires is a good example. NEVER leave cooking pans on your stove unattended, they can cause a serious, life-threatening fire and tackling such a fire the wrong way will undoubtedly make things worse.

How not to tackle a chip-pan fire

Here's the golden rule - **never throw water onto a hot oil (chip-pan) fire**. If you do, the water will instantly boil and turn to steam, throwing a huge spray of burning oil droplets high into the air. Because the oil is burning, spreading it out like this gives it rapid access to much more oxygen thus causing a massive fireball.

A fire extinguisher is also never used on a chip-pan fire, because a water extinguisher will have the same effect as pouring water on the fire, a powder extinguisher may cause an explosion while a carbon dioxide extinguisher will blast and spread the burning oil. A fire blanket is generally the best thing to use.

What is a fire blanket?

Fire blankets are made from thick wool treated with a flameproof coating, fibreglass or flameproof synthetic materials. You can also use them to help fight chemical fires if it's safe to do so. They can be wrapped around someone whose clothes have caught fire or you can wrap them around your body to help you escape from the flames.

How does a fire blanket work?

If a fire breaks out in your home, the best thing to do is to stay calm and evacuate quickly, closing the doors behind you and call the fire service. You may be able to deal with a small fire yourself using a fire extinguisher or a fire blanket, but if you have any doubts at all, **leave it** and get yourself and others to safety. Choose your life over your possessions. If you have a hot oil fire in your kitchen, the most effective way to suppress it is to place a fire blanket over the fire to cut off the oxygen supply. If you have no fire blanket, soak a tea towel in water, wring it out and then cover the pan completely with the towel. Both of these methods break the fire triangle by removing oxygen (air).

How to use a fire blanket

Be sure to read the instructions on the container when you buy one so you know how to use it properly in an emergency. In principle:

Turn off the heat if it's safe to do so.

Don't move the pan.

Fetch the fire blanket and pull on the tapes to release the blanket from its container.

Wrap the blanket around your hands before you go near the fire so you don't burn yourself.

Put the blanket over the container to smother the flames.

Leave the pan to cool completely.

Now leave the fire and exit the building, calling the fire service if necessary. Do not go back to the fire and do not uncover it again until it is **completely** cool.

If you have the slightest doubt about whether you can tackle a fire safely without risk to yourself or others - leave it alone, alert others nearby, get yourselves well away and call the fire service immediately.

Property Access for ESKOM Powerline Servitude Maintenance

A servitude across a property is the right to use the land of someone else for a specific purpose. This right is registered in the Deeds Office and attached to the title deed of the property. Eskom Holdings holds many servitudes to convey electricity across landowner property. Registered servitudes also describes the associated rights such as right to access or trimming of vegetation as well as special rights pertaining to the land owner. Holding a servitude does not imply that Eskom Holdings own the land.

Access to land on which Eskom Holdings holds servitudes and electrical infrastructure is a matter of concern to Eskom as well as landowners. Security on farms is important to landowners and coupled to this is the escalating crime rate on farms. Eskom Holdings has a right to enter farms in order to maintain their servitudes, overhead lines, structures, plant and obtain meter readings, however, Eskom staff and their contractors should pay appropriate respect to the landowner at all times. Landowners shall as far as possible be notified prior to the intended visit.

How to identify and verify Eskom employees and contractors

All Eskom staff will carry identity cards containing their photographs, indicating they are Eskom employees and Eskom contractors will carry identity cards displaying their photographs, indicating they are contractors. Letters containing their contract appointment as well as who to contact at Eskom will be given to each Contractor. [In the event of power interruptions caused by external factors, rapid restoration without any delay is in the interest of both Eskom and the customer. This is dependent on free movement at short notice to the landowner.](#)

Complaints? Landowners can report transmission problems to Customer Relations personnel Sonja Liebenberg 0828576607 or Veon Fourie 0735798898. Distribution issues should be reported to the Eskom Contact Centre 08600 37566.

2017 / 2018 LEFPA Membership Rates

Membership invoices are slightly delayed this year due to the VAT change. Please note that they are due for payment within 30 days of invoice date. Membership runs from 1 April 2018 until 31 March 2019. At the Special General Meeting on the 8th March, the membership rates for 2018 / 2019 listed below were approved.

PLEASE NOTE: membership will not be confirmed nor membership certificates issued unless a member's account is paid in full and up to date.

Basic Members	Basic Rates	Aerial Members	Aerial Rates
0 – 100 hectares	R 380.00 + VAT per year	Aerial	R 30.50 + VAT/Title Deed ha per year
101 – 500 hectares	R 875.00 + VAT per Year	Basic Aviation	R 6 565.00 + VAT per year
500+ hectares	R1.75+VAT/Title Deed ha per year	Small Aviation	R 36.15 + VAT per ha per year

2018 / 2019 Runway and Chemical Rates	
Runway fee (dirt strip) per load	R 375.00 + VAT per load
Runway fee (tar strip) per load	R 500.00 + VAT per load
Chemicals per litre	R 321.00 + VAT per litre

2018 / 2019 Team Variable Cost	
Team max 12 person crew	R 297.00 + VAT per team per day
Travel variable cost—Hyundai	R 7.50 + VAT per kilometre
Rations	R 75.00 + VAT per person per day

Activities for the Month - April

- Check all radios.
- Prepare manual traces.
- Attend LEFPA meetings regularly.
- Obtain LEFPA rules and regulations.
- Train your employees in fire management.
- Obtain standby rosters from your neighbours.
- Check that water points have adequate supplies.
- Burn open areas on rotational burning programmes.
- Implement a daily vehicle checklist to ensure fire readiness.
- Match your fire-fighting resources based on the fire risks identified.
- Prepare roads bordering open areas and firebreaks that will be burned.
- Obtain LEFPA standard operating procedures related to high FDI periods.
- Slash burning allowed if weather permits - get a burning permit from LEFPA.
- Implement procedures to ensure the availability and supply of fuel, rations, etc.
- Implement operational procedures to ensure quick response to provide medical and mechanical protection and other services.

sappi

LEFPA would like to thank Sappi for sponsoring the monthly activity desk pads for all Mpumalanga FPA's



Important Note:

- The 2018 Annual General Meeting will be held in the LEFPA Boardroom 14 June. Please diarise to attend, there will be more details in the May issue.
- Basic Firefighting Training is available to LEFPA members. Interested parties can contact the LEFPA office.
- FDI weather emails and SMSs are available to LEFPA members, contact Corné for more information.
- **SUCCESS cannot be spelt without U. Attend and participate - we need your contribution!**