



Deborah Cavanagh, BDTNRM Communications
Tel: (07) 4724 3544 Mob: 0427 243 001
deb.cavanagh@bdtprm.org.au www.bdtprm.org.au

BDTNRM Media Release

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Getting Chinee apple under control

THERE is a way to get rid of the chinee apple weed without ruining native vegetation and WetlandCare Australia wants to show landowners how.

A Wetland Protection and Rehabilitation Field Day, as part of the Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM wetland protection programme funded by the Australian Government, will be held on Thursday July 3 at Serpentine Lagoon where a project to control chinee apple while preserving wetlands has been hailed a success.

WetlandCare Australia project officer Amber Webster said the main aim of the project was to restore habitat for water birds dependent upon open shallow wetland habitat by removing the Chinee apple infestation on the perimeter of the lagoon.

"Now we want to show other landowners how contractors can mechanically clear chinee apple that is mixed in with native vegetation," Ms Webster said.

"This is important for many water birds which prefer areas with little adjacent vegetation to reduce the risk of predation. So clearing weed infestations like the Chinee apple bush restores the natural values for birds dependent on open shallow wetland habitat."

On the day, landowners Ryan Jones will talk about managing a property that has a nature refuge while Robbie Burns of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will talk about the Nature Refuges Incentive programme.

John Dowe of the Australian Centre for Tropical Fish Research (ACTFR) will speak about the ecological guidelines for removing Chinee apple.

There will also be a tour of the Serpentine Lagoon wetlands and two machinery demonstrations.

The Serpentine Lagoon project, funded by BDTNRM, involved ACTFR, Conservation Volunteers Australia, EConcern and WetlandCare. The project finished up late last year but the landholders continue to remove chinee apple on their property.

To RSVP to the Field Day contact Amber Webster of WetlandCare Australia on 4724 3544 or 0421 848 085 or email Amberwebster@wetlandcare.com.au.

For more information on chinee apple visit

http://bdtprm.org.au/surface_water_and_wetlands/bdtprm_water_program/serpentine_lagoon_removal_of_woody_weeds.html.

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CONTACTS:

Mob: 0427 243 001

Email: Deb.cavanagh@bdtprm.org.au

Website: www.bdtprm.org.au

Amber Webster: as above

John Hinchincliffe 04 2774-8666

John Dowe 4781 56 54