

Containing the spread in Wellington district

WITH AN EMPHASIS ON education Wellington Council weed officers have managed to contain the district's serrated tussock spread.

While it has been in the area since the 1970s, it has remained in just the south-eastern part, in Tablelands country.

Wellington Council weeds co-ordinator Andrew Cosier (pictured) said the weed was more prone there.

"We've had our main emphasis on educating landowners," he said.

"It's not the easiest weed to identify and landowners are not confident in identifying it.

"If people ring us about it, we'll go and have a look at what

they think might be it anyway – so they feel comfortable."

Education about the weed was conducted through mailbox drops, field day stalls, and

on-site inspections.

Mr Cosier said it was better to spend an hour on somebody's property spraying spots than trying to tackle it "after the horse had bolted".

"Then it costs more money, takes more time and more chemicals and more resources," he said.

As such the weeds team encouraged landholders to carry a small container of herbicide with them in their ute so if they spied serrated tussock on their property they could treat it.

"They can just give it a squirt and deal with it on the spot rather than trying to remember where it was and come back and deal with it," he said.

Mr Cosier said he tended to use Flupropanate to treat serrated tussock, despite

the fact it was slower working.

He said Roundup would do the job much faster but was more likely to affect other species in the pasture.

He said because serrated tussock seed was spread by the wind it was important to stay on top of any outbreaks.

Mr Cosier encouraged landowners to keep a look out so spraying could begin quickly. "The owner is the one going over their property each day, so it's important they get an eye in for it."

He said it should be of great concern to farmers, especially graziers, as once it took hold it could create a complete monoculture and kill any good pasture.

In the Wellington local government area it was mostly found to the south of Burrendong Dam near the Macquarie River.

However, Mr Cosier said some plants were germinating on the west side of Burrendong Way.

– KIM CHAPPELL



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