



FITZROY BASIN ASSOCIATION

*Our country. Our future.*

# WETLAND PROTECTION

## Reducing the impact of weeds



FBA partnered with Queensland Parks and Wildlife (QPWS), Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments, Greening Australia and local community members to reduce the impact of weeds at Sandy Point.

### Special wetlands need care

Sandy Point is at the southern end of the Shoalwater and Corio Bays – a Ramsar-listed wetland of international significance.

This area encompasses critically endangered beach scrub, migratory shorebird and fisheries habitat as well as culturally significant sites. The dunes are highly dynamic, with habitat suffering additional pressure from heavy recreational use.

Users were driving through sensitive beach scrub habitat to launch boats and walking across dunes to access the beach. This was weakening the structure of the dune habitat and allowing weeds such as Lantana to establish more easily.

In order to reduce the problem, FBA worked with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service through Caring for our Country funding, to address both the invasion of Lantana itself, and the source of disturbance.

### Successful Lantana control

The roving weed control team from QPWS partnered with Greening Australia to control Lantana through splatter gun spraying, focusing on roadsides and disturbed sections of beach scrub in Byfield National Park.

These sites were chosen as they are frequently disturbed by pedestrians and vehicle traffic which can act as vectors of weed spread to more intact habitats.

There was a high success rate for the project, with 85-95% of pest plants killed after treatment, and greater success occurring in areas that were easily accessible. The spread of Lantana had been too large for QPWS to manage alone.

Acting Ranger in Charge, Chris Cooper said, “We couldn’t have achieved the same result without this project.”

“It is fantastic that there is funding available to manage weeds in such an important area. It has meant that Lantana is now much more manageable,” he said.

On-ground works were supported by a campaign aimed at increasing community awareness.

Beach users were restricted to designated vehicle and pedestrian pathways to limit disturbance and were educated about the importance of beach scrub in stabilising dunes and providing habitat for sensitive species.

### A healthier dune habitat

The community now know how they can contribute to making the dune habitat a healthier and more resilient area that they can enjoy into the future.

“I think people like to do the right thing and know that they are not damaging the dunes and vegetation” said NRM Ranger, Leanne Henry.

By controlling weeds such as Lantana and restricting the spread of disturbance, natural regeneration can occur which will increase the ability of the beach scrub to provide ecosystem services including stabilisation of an erosion prone area, providing food, shelter and habitat for many insects, birds, reptiles and mammals.

A healthier, more resilient ecosystem can then better withstand future disturbances.

