# Brush wattle

*Paraserianthes lophantha*

www.weedbusters.org.nz

**Family**
Fabaceae (pea)

**Also known as**
Shrub wattle, *Acacia lophantha*, *Albizia lophantha*

**Where is it originally from?**
West Australia

**What does it look like?**
Short-lived tree (<5-10 m) with densely hairy ribbed twigs and bronze, hairy young shoots. Alternate frond-like leaves (20-30 cm) are twice divided along the midribs with 8-15 pairs of main subdivisions and 20-40 pairs of linear leaflets which are silky underneath. Tiny, numerous, green-yellow flowers in flowerheads (5 x 5-10 cm, May-Aug) resembling a bottlebrush are followed by flat, green to brown seed pods (8-15 cm) containing foul-smelling seeds.

Photo: Trevor James

**Are there any similar species?**
Other wattles and *Hakea* species are similar.

**Why is it weedy?**
Fast growing and maturing, and produces many long-lived seeds. Tolerates high to low rainfall, poor soils, salt, wind, and low fertility (fixes nitrogen).

**How does it spread?**
Contaminated soil and gravel, fresh and salt water movement all spread seeds. Common seed sources are hedgerows, shelterbelts, gardens, roadsides, and waste areas.

Photo: Trevor James

**What damage does it do?**
Tall, rapidly establishing stands overtop low-growing vegetation, but native forest species establish under wattle so impacts are usually confined to open and low-growing vegetation types.

**Which habitats is it likely to invade?**
Shrubland, disturbed forest, riverbanks, coastal fringes, gumland, short tussockland, and bare land.

**What can I do to get rid of it?**
1. Physical removal - Hand pull small plants, or dig out entire plant including roots (all year round): Dispose of at a refuse transfer station, burn, or bury deeply.
2. Cut and paste (all year round) - Cut the stem/trunk as close to the ground as possible and cover the entire stump with herbicide as soon as possible after cutting. Apply either metsulfuron gel (10g/l strength) or picloram gel (43g/l strength) to the entire cut stem. When a gel is inadequate apply a solution of diesel and product containing triclopyr + picloram (20:1 diesel:triclopyr/picloram). Apply the mixture over the entire exposed surface of the cut stump, i.e. top and sides.
3. Basal spray stems up to 20cm diametre with X-Tree Basal. Ensure the base is thoroughly covered at ground level.
4. Drill or frill - Drill downward sloping holes around the circumference of the trunk about 8-10 cm apart, or Frill (make deep cuts into the sapwood at regular intervals around the base of the tree, taking care not to ring-bark the plant). Fill the holes with undiluted 'neat' glyphosate (360g/L active ingredient) or saturate the frill cuts with glyphosate (360g/L active ingredient) mixed at 250ml/L
5. Foliar spray (Spring-Summer) - Apply Triclopyr herbicide (600g/L active ingredient) at a rate of 6ml/L to thoroughly wet all parts of plant. Note: This herbicide is 'grass friendly' but overspray will kill other (desirable) broadleaf plants. Do not use over water bodies or wetlands and use only as directed on label.

Photo: Carolyn Lewis

CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and directions for the purchase, use and storage of the product, are followed and adhered to.

**What can I do to stop it coming back?**
Stumps regrow. Reseeds following disturbance by fire, machinery or non-selective spraying. Light lover, dislikes growing amongst species of similar or even lesser height, which makes it a true pioneer species. Amongst well established, tall native vegetation, regeneration can be speeded by wattle control. Do not merely fell, as wattle recovers faster than native species and the higher light levels induce more seed germination. Clear all roads, metal dumps, quarries and other sources. Maintain native groundcover at all times.