

## IGC River Bank Rehabilitation – Pilot Project – Red 4 Tees

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**Introduction:** When surveying the Flora and Fauna across our golf course, we observed the dominance of 20 or so introduced weeds in the vegetation along our nearly three kilometre frontage to the Brisbane River. This situation is very common in riparian environments throughout Australia, where introduced weeds have become serious pests, causing significant damage to the naturally occurring plant species. Subsequent flow-on effects include River bank instability and erosion as well as reduction in quality of wild life habitat.

Weed trees and shrubs like Chinese Elm, Camphor Laurel, Broad-leaved Pepper, Castor Oil plant, Devil's Fig, Wild Tobacco and Leucaena have long been established along the River banks and are identified as being of very high control priority at IGC. This is due to their profuse production and dispersal of seeds and ability to quickly colonise open ground.

Similarly, several introduced vine species have more recently demonstrated their ability to not only survive storms and flooding, but thrive during the wetter conditions we've experienced over the past three years. Species such as Asparagus Vine, Balloon Vine, Cat's Claw Creeper, Morning Glory and Glycine are now commonly choking both naturally occurring and planted shrubs and trees along the River next to our golf course and are in urgent need of control. Their seeds are spreading rapidly and seedlings frequently establishing across our site.

For various reasons, including limited resources, weed control and replacement along the River bank at IGC has in the past been unsuccessful. With a little over two kilometres of riverside within the Council leased portion of IGC, riverbank vegetation management is an enormous and ongoing task.

The Natural History group is now testing a new approach based on (i) a staged program to control weed growth and eventual eradication of weeds such as those listed above and (2) the replacement of all weeds by re-planting naturally occurring species.

**Pilot Project** In order to demonstrate this new approach, we have initiated a pilot project on a relatively small (150m by 25m) section of the river bank beside Red 4 (from behind the back tee to about 45m to the front of the forward tee) that is representative of the river bank between IGC and the Indooroopilly Island Conservation Park. All of our 'very high priority' weed species occur there. Most of the other River bank weed species also occur there. See **Figures 1 & 2** below:



**Figure 1** - Location of IGC Riverbank Pilot Project next to the Red 4 tees.



**Figure 2** - General view of Pilot Project site before start of work, showing the dominance by weeds.

To date, we have gratefully received assistance from both our IGC Course Manager and his maintenance staff and members of the Golfing Gardeners. All volunteers are very welcome to join the pilot project. A work calendar will be published soon.



**Figure 3** - Dave Hassall & Phil Smith after a good morning's work! (photo by John Walthall)

**Project aim:** To eradicate (using applicable/accepted methods) all introduced plant pest species from the identified area; monitor and control pest plant reinfestation; remove plant refuse where



practical; plant and maintain a selection of native plant species observed on our site and/or considered to have grown originally in the area.

**Project outcome:** Evaluate methods used; evaluate cost effectiveness of those methods; assess application for other areas of IGC's river bank; and project positive 'image' to wider community.

**Project costs:** We anticipate the vast majority of the project's work will be of the 'manual labour' category and we expect most of this will be done by IGC members. Consequently, costs to the Club for this sort of work should be minimal, which has been the case to date. However, the need for outlays will arise as the project progresses, for such materials as plants, fertiliser and establishment irrigation. . All costs will need to be pre-approved by the Club.

**Future updates:**

Further information will be posted on progress, review of completed works and proposed future stages. Please direct offers of assistance or questions to John Walthall & David Hassall.