



Coastal Weed Management Workshop Summary

This workshop was coordinated by John Marsden Smedley from SPRATS (Sea Spurge Remote Area Teams) with support from the School of Geography and Environmental Studies, UTAS, and Kathleen Broderick, NRM South.

These summary notes have been prepared as a record of the event by Nicole Gill and Kathleen Broderick.

Key Learnings:

1. Volunteers well organized and supported by organisations like SPRATS, Wildcare, regional NRM bodies, DPIPWE are contributing an enormous amount to reducing the weed threats to our natural systems.
2. The standard of coordination and management of volunteer weed removal is very high and is set to continue provided that we can adapt to the changing nature of volunteering and strategic consideration of the weed threat.

Volunteering:

- Volunteers are keen to participate in remote area activities ie 'adventure volunteering'. This is a very different market than the more "regular" or mainstream tourist activities.
- Remote work must be well organised with good logistics, support for OH&S, monitoring (consider monitoring weed work, level of threat and impact of activity). A core organizing group with highly developed skills is essential.

Challenges:

- Volunteers are more effective and have less adverse impacts if they are well trained and skilled and their activities are well managed, eg avoiding adverse impacts on shorebirds, able to identify emerging weed threats.

- Consider ways that highly skilled volunteers can be encouraged to continue and share their knowledge with others. ie how to avoid burnout of volunteers and how to ensure there is a succession strategy.
- New and emerging coastal weeds will always be arriving and establishing, and it is difficult to predict which ones will present the greatest threats, or where the colonising plants will appear.

Strategic Issues:

- Volunteers should build and maintain relationships with bureaucrats who support innovative approaches and ideas for volunteer activities.
- Consider local interest and activity in a regional context.
- Plan, implement, monitor the efficacy of methods used, and be prepared to rethink the strategy.