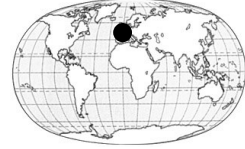


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INVASIVE ALIEN PLANT SPECIES OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN IN AUSTRALIA: THEIR IMPORTANCE, EVOLUTION AND MANAGEMENT HISTORY

In the early years after colonisation the alien invasive species that arrived in Australia were dominated by European species associated with a) the origins of colonists and encouragement to bring their plants with them, and b) the rapid installation of agricultural practices of European origin to which many such plant species were highly adapted. With time the domination of the Australian alien flora with species of European origin has diminished as species better adapted to Australian climatic conditions have arrived and become established from other areas of closer proximity and ecological similarity around the world; notably South Africa, Asia and South America and from other tropical regions. Many invasive alien species of European origin have nonetheless been in Australia long enough to have adapted to the Australian environment, following separate evolutionary pathways to their native counterparts in Europe. These will be discussed. The management of weeds of European origin in Australia has a long history dating back to the early 1900. In this paper the history of their management particularly using biological control is documented and their successful management as a group is reviewed.

keywords: weed, exotic plant, biological control, methods of introduction