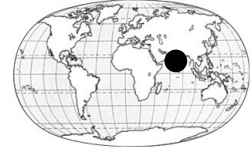


Sanjay BHATIA, Rajani CHOUDHARY, Manjot SINGH

Department of Zoology, University of Jammu, J&K, India



**CURRENT STATUS OF INVASIVE WEED *PARTHENIUM HYSTEROPHORUS*
(ASTERACEAE) AND IMPACT OF DEFOLIATION BY THE BIOCONTROL
AGENT *ZYGOGRAMMA BICOLORATA* (COLEOPTERA: CHRYSOMELIDAE) IN
JAMMU, (J&K), INDIA**

Parthenium hysterophorus L. (Asteraceae) is an annual herbaceous plant native to the tropical America. Within the last 100 years it has found its way to Africa, Australia and Asia. It is widely invasive and has become a major problem in India with the weed spreading across majority of the states including the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It is a major crop and pasture weed and also a serious human health hazard causing allergic dermatitis and respiratory ailments. *Parthenium* is a serious problem in Jammu region with the weed spreading to all the six districts. It has achieved the status of worst weed owing to its adverse effects on human beings, livestock, agriculture and biodiversity of the region. Biological control programme involved the introduction of leaf – feeding beetle *Zygogramma bicolorata*. It has successfully established in the region with promising results. Feeding by *Z. bicolorata* causes damage to meristems resulting in shorter height of the primary stem and changed branching pattern. The paper records current distribution and status of this weed in Jammu region, besides notes on bionomics and effectiveness of the biocontrol agent in controlling *Parthenium* has been discussed.

keywords: *Parthenium hysterophorus*, *Zygogramma bicolorata*, biological control, defoliation, impact