

Environmental Weed of the Month – Coral Tree (Erythrina x sykesii)

**Common names**

Coral Tree, Flame tree

**Family**

Fabaceae

**Origin**

South America

**Description**

A large, sprawling tree 12-18m in height. Young shoots and leaves start out green and hairy. Stems turn light brown and become smooth and covered in spines as they mature. Leaves are broad, and oval/heart shaped, growing oppositely along the stem. Dark orange/red, pea-like flowers grow on the tips of the stems.

**How do they spread?**

Coral trees don't produce viable seed but are capable of rooting from any branches that touch the ground. They also grow extremely easily from cuttings and pieces dropped on the ground.

**Why are they an issue?**

They grow very quickly and in a wide range of habitats. They outcompete native plants for nutrients and light, as well as allelopathically suppressing growth underneath them. On Norfolk, Coral Trees are particularly found in creeks and swampy areas in the Headstone/Mission Pool area. They make excellent habitat for Taala Birds which themselves are a large threat to our local fauna.

**Where are you likely to find it?**

Are capable of growing in almost any conditions. They are commonly found in the swamy areas of Headstone/Mission Pool.

**How can I control it?**

1. Bore and fill (all year round): Make 1 hole every 150 mm around the trunk and fill or saturate each hole with



metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (3g mixed with water) or 20ml of a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (undiluted).

2. Cut and squirt (all year round):  
Make 1 cut every 100mm around the trunk and fill or saturate each cut with metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (2g mixed with water) or 15ml of a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (undiluted).



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