

MEDIA RELEASE

Argentine Ant Eradication Program Update

Norfolk Island Regional Council staff and contractors have successfully completed the first round of ground baiting in Zone 12, which includes Bumboras and Point Ross (Crystal Pool) Reserves. The team also continues to undertake monitoring and ground baiting in areas that have already been treated but small infestations persist.

This year's aerial baiting contract has been awarded to Castles Environmental and Greg Quinn the previous drone pilot will continue to complete this work. Greg will start aerial treatments in zone 12 in January so please keep an eye out for signage and radio announcements for when this is occurring in the reserves.

Council is excited to inform the community that this year's aerial applications will be utilising a new drone platform, which is at the cutting edge of unmanned aerial vehicles used in agricultural operations. The powerful and reliable drone is XAG's flagship drone which opens a new era of smart agriculture and invasive species control.



The program has never looked better but as a community we need to continue to be vigilant. Even if an area has been treated it is not necessarily completely free of Argentine Ants. It can take several treatments to completely eradicate them from an area. An eradicated area needs to be free from ants for at least two years with regular monitoring.

If you live or work in these areas, please remember that Argentine Ants could still be there. Do not move items such as mulch, firewood, green waste, timber, soil, plants, cuttings, fruit and vegetables, car wrecks and machinery without checking for ants and contacting the team.

Sunny, the detector dog, has started working out in the field. If you see Sunny out, please do not interrupt her training or work. Finding Argentine Ants needs to be the most fun/rewarding thing in her life.

Please remember to contact Customer Care on 22244 if you think you have found Argentine Ants or if you have any questions and they will put you in contact with the Argentine Ant Eradication Program staff. Community support of the program and its methods are critical for eradication to be achieved and we thank you for your ongoing cooperation.

Tara Patel

TEAM LEADER BIODIVERSITY

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