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BEETLE TO FIGHT MIMOSA

A Native American beetle will be released in parts of the Territory to target *Mimosa Pigra* weed infestations.

The Mimosa Flea Beetle attacks the weed’s roots and is expected to significantly reduce the spread of the plant.

Newly appointed Environment Minister Len Kiely said the use of biological control is an effective way of reducing the impact of the weed.

“The beetle will be released at Adelaide River and near the Finnis and Daly Rivers early next year after a trial release at Mary River.

“Mimosa is one of Australia’s 20 Weeds of National Significance and it continues to be a serious problem in the Territory.

“The weed now occupies more than 80,000 hectares in the Top End and threatens several wetlands of national and international significance.

“The flea beetle is the latest agent to help limit the spread of this destructive plant.

“Staff from my department have been working hard to develop techniques to breed the beetle.

“The potential distribution of mimosa is enormous, stretching from Broome in WA to northern NSW.

“Six other agents that attack various parts of the plant are well established in the NT and are beginning to have a positive impact on mimosa.

“Eradicating mimosa will help protect our environment and preserve our great lifestyle,” Mr Kiely said.

Mimosa was first introduced in Australia during the late 1800’s when it was planted in the George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens.

The flea beetle was imported into Australia by the CSIRO and has undergone extensive testing to ensure that it would not feed on other plant species.

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