



Cumbungi

Bullrush or cat's tail

Typha species



Description

There are three species of Cumbungi in Australia. Narrow leaf cumbungi (*Typha domingensis*) and broadleaf cumbungi (*Typha orientalis*) are native species while *Typha latifolia* is an introduced plant native to Europe. Generally the leaves of the introduced cumbungi are about 1 metre in length compared to 2–3 metres for the native species. All species grow in permanent fresh or brackish water. Leaves grow in bunches from below water level, are flat or slightly rounded and sometimes springy.

Flowering stems grow erect from the middle of the leaf cluster, are round and stiff, and near the top bear two oblong-brown compact masses of small furry flowers. The masses of flowers are sometimes separated by a short length of stem. On maturity the upper mass disperses first, leaving a 10–20 cm dark brown velvety spike

Distribution and habitat

Cumbungi is found throughout Queensland in stationary or slowly-flowing water up to two metres deep.

The problem

Cumbungi is the most widespread water weed in north Queensland. Infestations of cumbungi interfere with water flow to form swamps, shorten bore drains, reduce water quality, provide breeding places for vermin and mosquitoes, and reduce stock access to water.

Mechanical control

If accessible, slashing while the seed head is still green provides some control. Repeated slashing is necessary to maintain control as slashing alone will not kill cumbungi.

Herbicide control

Cumbungi should be sprayed when actively growing and before seed is set.

Various herbicides are recommended for different situations (see table for rates and methods).

It is important to consider the intended use of the water before deciding which treatment to use:

Water for household or recreational use

The safest control method, and the only alternative where water is for household or recreational use, is to spray with glyphosate using either low volume or high volume methods.

As long as care is taken to avoid spraying non-target plants, these methods are safe in any situation. There is no need to withhold stock or change methods of water usage.

The treatment should be repeated annually to ensure that the bullrushes do not reinfest to any great degree. To avoid loss of water quality caused by the dead plants collapsing into the water, it is best to burn the plant above the water surface six weeks after spraying.

Waterways, channels and drains

In waterways, channels and drains where water is **not** used for household, gardening or recreational purposes, 2,2-DPA (a soluble powder) can be used. This product, however, is not always readily available.

Amitrole-T is also effective and economical for spot spraying in irrigation channels, and can be used when channels are full.

Bore drains and dams

In bore drains and dams, again, where water is **not** used for household, gardening, or recreational purposes, glyphosate/roundup or diurex WG can be used.

Pasture

Glyphosate or roundup can be used to control Cumbungi in pasture situations, however care must be taken as these herbicides will kill pasture grasses and legumes.

Further information

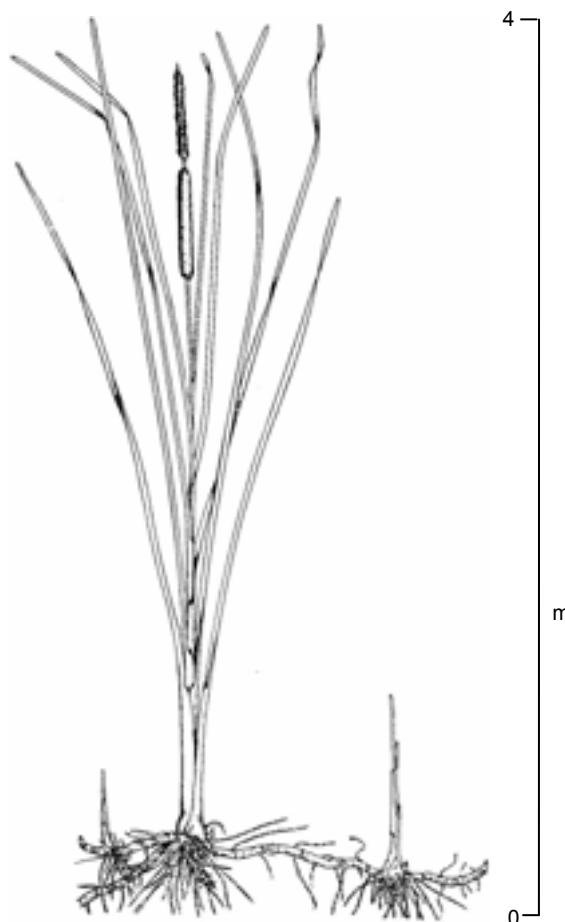
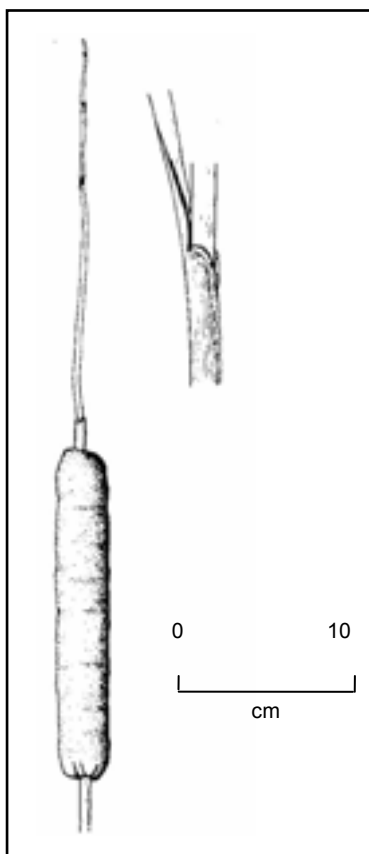
Further information is available from the vegetation management/weed control/environmental staff at your local government.



TABLE 1 – HERBICIDES REGISTERED FOR THE CONTROL OF CUMBUNGI

Situation	Herbicide/Trade name	Rate	Method	Remarks
Waterways, channels and drains	Glyphosate/Round up	1.3 L/100L 9L/ ha	Overall H.V.* Boom	Very safe to use-avoid run-off or spray drift entering water; product readily available
	2,2-DPA Systemic Herbicide	2 kg/100 L 20 kg/ha	Overall H.V.* Boom	Product is soluble powder. Not always available
Bore drains	Glyphosate/Round up	1.3 L/100 L 9 L/ha	Overall H.V.* Boom	Easier to use. Can use for household and recreational water
	Diurex WG Herbicide	39-78kg/ha	Spray directly onto wet soil	For long-term control. Do not use for household or recreational water
Irrigation channels	Amitrole + Ammonium Thiocyanate/Amitrole-T	2.3 L/100 L	Overall H.V.*	Apply during flowering period between January and May. Effective and economical for spot spraying
Pasture	Glyphosate/Round up	1.3 L/100 L 9 L/ha	Overall H.V.* Boom	Will kill pasture grasses and legumes. Use of wiper application recommended for direct application to weed.

* H.V. = high volume application



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