

Wednesday 4th May, 2011

Help stop the spread of Easter Cassia- a serious threat to the Shoalhaven's bushland

A commonly grown ornamental garden plant called Easter Cassia (*Senna pendula* var. *pendula*) is invading large tracks of bushland in and surrounding many of the towns and villages of the Shoalhaven.

It is easy to spot at the moment as its five petal bright yellow flowers are in full bloom.

The plant is an ornamental garden plant which grows up to 4 metres in height and produces a brilliant yellow bloom around Easter time on the South Coast, hence the name.

Easter Cassia originates from South America and it mainly occurs east of the Great Dividing Range with its southern limit being around Ulladulla.

The plant produces hundreds of green pods around 10 - 15 cm long which turn brown when ripe and split producing 20 – 50 black seeds. These seeds are spread long distances by birds and other animals and remain viable in the soil for more than 5 years.

There are many volunteer Bushcare groups across the Shoalhaven working hard to control and remove this environmental weed from bushland reserves, with the support of Shoalhaven City Council.

You can help by not growing this plant in your garden or if you already have it, removing it and replacing it with a less invasive species.

Some of the alternative species that you can replace Easter Cassia with that have the same growth habit and flowers are Golden Honey-Myrtle (*Melaleuca bracteata*) or some of the local native Wattles such as The Sydney Golden Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* spp *longifolia*) and Sallee Wattle (*Acacia floribunda*).

For further information on safe non invasive garden plants log onto Shoalhaven City Council's website at <http://shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Environment/Gardens.htm>

If you would like any further information on this or you are interested in being involved Council's Bushcare program please contact the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator on 4429 3592 or e-mail Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

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