

Grazon, Broom and Weedwiping

Extracts from Nibblers online discussion group June 2006

Has anyone had any experience using the chemical Grazon.

Apparently it's active against Broom and gorse. We have quite an issue with Broom on one of our Heaths, however it is also in amongst heather, does anybody know if Grazon is harmful to other heathland plants etc. I have also been told that it is applied via spray, I was wondering whether it is suitable for use with a weed wipe?

Any other ideas / info on how to knobble a broom invasion?

many thanks

Adam Hamilton
Countryside Ranger
CLACS

Adam,

Grazon 90 (clopyralid + triclopyr) is recommended for the control of broom and gorse in established grassland. It will, however, also control numerous other species - so great care is needed if applying on a conservation site. For example, the triclopyr component will damage or kill a wide range of perennial dicots (e.g. most woody species, including *Calluna* and *Erica* spp.) and clopyralid is particularly effective against species of the family Asteraceae (Compositae). However, Grazon 90 does have an off-label approval (own risk) for application via weed-wiper - to control perennial dicots in established grassland.

There is something of a question mark over the legality of applying Grazon 90 to heathland, but I think that it should be OK. Under the current approvals system - which does not include "established grassland" - heathland or moorland which can be grazed could be classed as "permanent grassland", grass-dominated heathland that is not grazed could be "amenity grassland", whilst areas with a smaller grass component should be "amenity vegetation". Decide for yourself (or check with PSD) where "established grassland" would lie!

This herbicide is very toxic to aquatic organisms. Do not apply near watercourses or on other areas where there is a high risk of water contamination e.g. on steep slopes. Exclude livestock for at least 7 days after treatment. Always read the label!

Similar products are Blaster (Headland Amenity), approved for "amenity grass", and Greencrop Hi-Grass 90, approved for "established grass".

You should consider if you really need to use a product that includes clopyralid, or if you should just treat the gorse and broom with triclopyr. Incorporating clopyralid may unnecessarily increase the risk to non-target species. If you want a triclopyr product, try Garlon 2 (Syngenta) - <http://www.syngenta-crop.co.uk/NR/exeres/87CECC87-FAF9-423E-81AA-20573D4CB01C.frameless.htm> - which is approved for gorse control in "established grassland" and "non-crop areas". Apply as a directed treatment. Not sure if it can be applied through a weed-wiper, so you would need to check - but there doesn't seem to be any specific exclusion of this option, so it should be legal. Again, this herbicide will also kill heather, heaths and numerous other species - so beware.

Grass species should not be significantly affected by applications of clopyralid or triclopyr.

Other possible alternatives might be slightly less effective (e.g. 2,4-D) or present an even higher risk to non-target species (e.g. glyphosate, picloram). Some other herbicides, previously available for use against woody weeds, have now been withdrawn (e.g. imazapyr and fosamine-ammonium) and must not be used.

I hope that this is of some help.

Chris

Chris Britt
Senior Consultant
ADAS

Grazon is commonly used for spot-spraying of nettles, thistles and docks, so I would assume it will have an impact on most broadleaves

I have just used some on gorse, result as yet unknown, but the chat from New Zealand was that it needs plenty of water so you may infer that a weed wiper won't work. I have just used an updated weed wiper on thistles and nettles and the result looks good, as the nettles look very unhappy and the thistles are yellowing on their tops which was a good sign with my old weed wiper. He used about 1 in a hundred dilution whereas my old wedgwik used a 30% solution.

The contractor, who did this in NZ, had a tank and hand lance on the front of his quad bike pulling contrarotating bristle drum weedwiper on to which the glyphosate was sprayed.
Richard M

Are there dilution rates for chemicals other than Glyphosate for use in weedwipers?

Mary Holloway

I used a wedgwik type weedwiper i.e a frame with wet ropes in a V pattern and used roundup at 30% concentration for many years. At one time we added a wetting agent as well but the new rotating brush type seems to use chemical at boom spray concentrations as this is sprayed onto the rotating brush, but this was using glyphosphate. Common sense says that you should mix all chemicals at a boom spray concentration but then common sense is a short cut to disaster these days. We have had a very good kill of thistles and nettles as the idea is that the driver pushes a button when he needs chemical added to the rotating drum so he keeps pressing when approaching a thick bunch of weeds.

I would suggest that you need to know what type of weed wiper you are going to use before getting a specific recommendation as to the concentration, as an old type needs 30% and the new type 1%.

Richard M

There is a new type of wiper available that apparently does not drip and refills itself only when needed (to do with measuring connectivity between two points on the wipe itself. This prevents sensitive vegetation from being dripped on when crossing areas that are not thickly covered in the weed you are trying to eradicate/weaken. Unfortunately I can't remember the name of it (having seen a demo yesterday, I must be getting old) The Heather Trust have details of this and I'm sure the company in question will give advice on dilution rates etc.

Rob.

Author wrote:

> Any other ideas / info on how to nobble a broom invasion?

Any ideas on how to have any broom left under cattle grazing...?

All the broom formerly on one of our sites is either reduced to highly pruned bushes, forming a creeping mat on the ground or is gone altogether. Much the same has happened to the Gaultheria (which was smallish scattered knee-high bushes to start with).

The site is a restored heathland fairly heavily grazed in winter and lightly grazed in summer, both over the last five years or so. They eat broom mainly in winter. They do nibble some common gorse but make little impression. They eat dwarf furze very keenly (not enough western gorse round here to know about that).

Here are some photos:



Broom pruned by fairly heavy winter grazing by BW cattle – Richard Collingridge



Gaultheria suppressed by fairly heavy winter grazing by BW cattle – Richard Collingridge

Regards,

Richard

It's the Weedswiper made by Micron. We purchased one last year.

Mike Sandison
Essex Wildlife Trust

It was probably the new machine from Micron contact details below

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Stephen Comber

Additional to my enquiry about dilution rates for chemicals other than glyphosate in weedwipers, does anyone have specific experience of using other products such as Grazon in weedwipers and if so what results have they found. I am particularly interested in treatments for ragwort.

Mary Holloway

We've tried using barrier H, which is a citronella based herbicide, this year for ragwort. We treated the plants at the rosette stage early in the year, as advised on the manufacturers instructions. The feedback i get from others who've used it is very variable. Some say it's been really effective and others not. Our experience so far is that we've reduced the vigour of the ragwort and reduced the numbers of plants by about 30%. Where there is regrowth from treated rosettes (about 70%) it is very stunted & weakened. We reckon it'll take a few years to get the ragwort problem at the site in question to an acceptable level. But it is, so far, a better option than volunteers pulling by hand or lazy dog, or a less selective herbicide. It's easy to miss rosettes completely though if you have a big infestation or don't work across the site in a systematic way.

Helen

A neighbouring farmer, now dead, used to maintain that pulling ragwort left hair roots, which then grew. If correct then poisoning is better if it truly kills the plant. The problem with weed wiping is timing and you need to hit the problem at the right time and contractors are notorious for not appearing when wanted.

If a low lying early site could share a complete kit with someone half way up a hill, and also someone living in the clouds, that might make sense as you need to buy a quad bike plus front tank for hand lance and towed weed wiper.

American harvesters start in Texas and work north until they harvest frozen grain in Canada, so such a scheme should be possible. Start on the south coast and end up in the Highlands, but just wait for the complaints that someone else left the kit in bad order, so one itinerant driver would be ideal, living in a self propelled caravan towing a trailer with the quad bike and weedwiper. As soon as he finishes pay him with a post dated cheque, which you stop if he has done a lousy job!

Richard
