BURNETT CATCHMENT CARE ASSOCIATION

Supporting Sustainable Land Management in the Burnett

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THE TINGID BUG

CARVALHOTINGIS VISENDA

CATS CLAW CREEPER BIOCONTROL AGENT

WHAT IS THE TINGID BUG?

The Tingid bug is a biocontrol agent for Cats Claw Creeper (CCC), originating from Brazil and Argentina. It was the first biocontrol agent against CCC to be release in Australia back in May 2007.

The adult is approximately 3mm in length and is easily identified by a single raised black knob on each, otherwise transparent wing. The nymphs (juveniles) are smaller, mottled brown but paler than the adults, and move about in groups on the underside of leaves.

Adult females lays anything from 6-37 eggs in distinctive rows along the central vien on the underside of the leaves. Eggs within a particular group hatch at the same time, about 13 days after laying. Nymphs undergo 5 growth stages before becoming adults. Adults mature to become reproductive after about 12 days, and continue to reproduce through their lifespane which lasts, on average about 280 days.

HOW DOES THE BUG AFFECT CATS CLAW?

Both adults and nymphs feed by sucking the contents of the leaf cells, resulting in characteristic white speckling on the leaves and eventually chlorosis (whitening of the lower mature leaves).

The nymph is less motile than the adults and feed primarily on the underside of the leaves. This feeding and subsequent loss of chlorophyll severely limits the ability of the vine to photosynthesis.

This can reduce the vigour of the vine, cause defoliation and reduce the likelihood of flowering and seed production. Tingids co-exist with the vine and will not eradicate CCC.

Tingids have been tested on a wide range of other plants and animal species in accordance with strict Biosecurity Queensland guidelines. Tingids survive on several other plants, but where this happened, they failed to reproduce and died out.

HOW TO RELEASE THE BUG?

Release Tingids onto healthy growing vine forming a dense ground cover in shady areas and above flood levels. A tree canopy overhead will provide some protection from frost.

The Tingids go dormant over winter and breeding slows. A successful release is determined by the evidence of eggs, nymphs or adults present 12 months after the initial release.

Monitor 12 months after the initial release by looking for signs of chlorosis (whitening of the leaves), if present, look under the leaf for signs of adult insects or nymphs and eggs that are laid along the mid rib of the leaf.