

Appendix 2: Other non-lethal treatments

A variety of non-lethal techniques have been investigated in Tasmania to reduce browsing. For example, a University of Tasmania study found that eucalypt seedlings suffered approximately 15% damage when grown in the cover of tall shrubs.¹ In another experiment, tall bracken fern cover reduced browsing for the first month but after 70 days eucalypt seedlings suffered “bad damage”.² The university has also conducted trials with sweet and bitter lupins, neem and weeds and is investigating whether fat-stemmed eucalypt seedlings offer increased protection. There is also some interest in testing the effectiveness of fish oil fertilisers and biodynamic techniques as both a deterrent to browsing animals and a fertiliser for seedlings.

Animals that do not like the taste of bitter substances may be repelled by Flowers of Daphne and the world’s most bitter known substance, Denatonium Benzoate. Our experience with *Rodrepel*, also a bitter substance, was that the entire crop failed, largely due to browsing – suggesting that animals were not repelled. However, further investigations could be carried out in agricultural trials to test their effect on reducing browsing by rabbits.

Repellex Deer Repellent also makes the plant taste bittersweet to some animals. The manufacturers say that it can protect existing and new growth from deer browsing for up to a year with the application of one tablet placed in the soil next to the plant’s roots. It also serves as a fertilizer. According to the manufacturer it is non-toxic and biodegradable but tests would need to be conducted to ensure Australian native animals do not ingest the tablets. *Repellex* currently costs AUD\$300 for 500 tablets. It is available from <www.garden-shops.com>.

Bobbex Organic Deer Repellent is an organic foliar spray, which feeds the plant and stimulates growth. It has been found to repel deer in the USA. The

¹ pers. comm. Clare McArthur, CRC, 8.5.03

² pers. comm. Clare McArthur, CRC, 8.5.03

manufacturer recommends reapplication every three weeks during the growing season. It currently costs AUD\$80 for 2 litres concentrate, which makes 11 litres of repellent. It is available from <www.garden-shops.com>.

Hinder Deer and Rabbit Repellent is a foliar spray. It must be reapplied if leaves get wet and can last up to 4 weeks. Its active ingredients are ammonium soaps of fatty acids. It costs AUD\$30 to make 19 litres of repellent spray and is available from <www.garden-shops.com>.

Deer-Off is a bio-degradable repellent made from organic ingredients including inedible egg solids. One application should last up to 3 months. It costs AUD\$35 for ½ kilogram concentrate and is available from <www.garden-shops.com>.