

REPORT ON CELEBRATION OF PARTHENIUM AWARENESS WEEK AT HIMALAYAN FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE, SHIMLA

Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI), Shimla, Himachal Pradesh celebrated **Parthenium Awareness Week (16th -22nd August, 2018)** on **21st August 2018** in the Conference Hall of HFRI, Shimla. All the Officers, Scientists, Research staff of HFRI, Shimla participated in the programme.



At the outset, **Sh. Ashwani Kumar, Assistant Chief Technical Officer**, Extension Division, HFRI, Shimla welcomed Group Coordinator Research, Head of Office, All HODs, Officers, Scientists, and Research staff in the programme and apprised about the importance of the celebration of the **Parthenium Awareness Week**.

Dr. Ranjeet Singh, Scientist-G & Head, Forest Protection Division delivered a talk on the topic titled “**Biological Control of Parthenium in India**”. He started his presentation with a note that in India, Parthenium is considered to be one of the worst weed for causing health problems in human beings and animals besides causing huge losses to the crop productivity and plant biodiversity. *Parthenium hysterophorus* L. basically a native of West Indies and tropical part of North and South America, is a herbaceous plant belonging to family Asteraceae, commonly known as carrot weed or congress grass and was introduced in India accidentally along with wheat imported from USA under PL-



480 programme in 1955. Since then, it has invaded approximately 35 million hectare in India. Now, it has become one of the main weed in almost all types of agricultural lands besides infesting wastelands, community lands, roads and railway track sides and forest also. He also explained in detail that under biological control Programme of Parthenium in India, 3 insect species were imported in 1983 from Mexico, out of which only host-specific leaf feeding beetle, *Zygogramma bicolorata* Pallister (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae) was found to be quite successful. Seven years after first release of this beetle, it reported feeding on an important oilseed crop, sunflower. He also told that insects, fungi, nematodes, snails, slugs, competitive plants and microorganism may be the bio-control agents for the Parthenium but so far in the world, insects have received maximum attention in biological control of Parthenium followed by competitive plants and pathogens. He also informed that on the basis of available information about competitive plants species, it can be concluded that among all the plants species, *Cassia tora* can be recommended for deliberate replacement of Parthenium on the road sides, community and waste land in most of the states of India. Dr. Singh also dwelt upon the different methods of management in different ecosystems like spray of glyphosate @ 0.5 % before flowering in Wasteland ecosystem; spray of 2,4-D ethyl ester @ 0.2 % in Grassland Ecosystem, introduction of *Zygogramma bicolorata* and broad-cast of *Cassia tora* in Forest land ecosystem and spray glyphosate @ 0.5 % in road sides which can restrict the growth of Parthenium.



Dr. K.S.Kapoor, Group Coordinator Research, HFRI, Shimla also spoke on the occasion and highlighted that such awareness activities are very important to manage and control of the invasive weed. He highlighted the importance of the topic and gave a brief overview about the research works carried out by HFRI on control measures of invasive weeds in general and Parthenium in particular. He moderated the discussions at different points of time amongst the participants.

The programme ended with vote of thanks by **Sh. Ashwani Kumar, Assistant Chief Technical Officer**, Extension Division, HFRI, Shimla to Group Coordinator Research, Head of Office, All HODs, Officers, Scientists, and Research staff. He also thanked the speaker of the day Dr. Singh for providing valuable information on the concerned topic. He also thanked, Shri S.P. Negi, Head, Extension Division under whose guidance the whole programme was organized.

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Glimpses of the Event

