

KILLARNEY NATIONAL PARK

Control Methods For Rhododendron (*Ponticum*) in Nature Conservation Sites

Brash Dead Hedges



DEAD HEDGING IS A METHOD USED IN KNP FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF CUT RHODODENDRON BRASH AND HAS MANY ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS



TO CONSTRUCT A DEER-PROOF HEDGE, LAY CUT BRASH CAREFULLY TO MAKE A HEDGE WHICH SHOULD BE AS HIGH (2 METRES) AND AS WIDE (3-4 METRES) AS POSSIBLE. AVOID LEAVING GAPS IN HEDGES, THIS IS BEST DONE BY WALKING ON HEDGE TO COMPRESS BRASH UNDERFOOT



HEDGE WIDTH IS MOST IMPORTANT. DEER AND OTHER HOOFED ANIMALS ARE RELUCTANT TO CROSS OVER A WIDE UNSTABLE BARRIER WHERE THEY ARE UNSURE OF SOUND FOOTING. WELL CONSTRUCTED HEDGES CAN REMAIN DEER-PROOF FOR UP TO TEN YEARS



DEAD-HEDGE ENCLOSURES SHOULD NOT EXCEED AN AREA LARGER THAN HALF AN ACRE. A SERIES OF SMALL ENCLOSURES ON SITE HELPS TO REDUCE LABOUR INPUT WHEN HANDLING BRASH. GATES SHOULD BE PLACED IN HEDGES FOR ACCESS TO ENCLOSURE.



CORRIDORS BETWEEN ENCLOSURES ARE IMPORTANT TO FACILITATE MOVEMENT OF DEER AND OTHER LARGE ANIMALS AND REDUCES THE RISK OF FIRE SPREADING



FIRE BREAKS MUST BE ALLOWED FOR IF HEDGES ARE CLOSE TO COMBUSTIBLE VEGETATION SUCH AS GORSE, HEATHER, MOLINA ETC.

ADVANTAGES:

Excludes browsing animals for up to ten years | Creates excellent habitat for insects, birds and small mammals
Facilitates natural regeneration | Provides site shelter | No necessity to burn or remove brash from site
Clean site for follow-up maintenance

DISADVANTAGES:

Fire risk

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS:

Sufficient Rhododendron brash available for hedge construction | Correct construction of hedge
Fire breaks where necessary

***This Method Is Recommended For Sites With A High Density of Rhododendron
And Where There Is A Necessity To Exclude Browsing Mammals***

For further information contact Peter O'Toole at Killarney National Park :: Phone: 087 6781614.