Journal of Animal &Plant Sciences, 2016. Vol.28, Issue 3: 4456-4456
Publication date 1/05/2016, **http://www.m.elewa.org/JAPS***; ISSN 2071-7024*

Increased browsing pressure on a woody encroacher (*Dichrostachys cinerea*) treated with molasses: a pilot study

C. Esterhuizen and W.J. Myburgh
Department of Nature Conservation, Tshwane University of Technology, Private Bag X680, Pretoria 0001, South Africa
Correspondence should be addressed to W. J. Myburgh; myburghwj@tut.ac.za

Keywords: bush encroachment, molasses, utilization pressure, *Dichrostachys cinerea*

1 ABSTRACT

Bush encroachment is a global problem, which decreases the herbaceous productivity and the carrying capacity of an area. The loss of grassland and savannah habitat to encroaching woody species is a major concern of wildlife conservationists and conservation agencies around the world. The objective of this study was to investigate differences in utilization pressure on the woody species encroacher *Dichrostachys cinerea* (Sickle bush) by browsers, between molasses treated and non-treated individuals, on Madikwe Game Reserve (MGR). A total of 200 *Dichrostachys cinerea* individuals were studied in an area of 2 147 ha (2.36%) of the reserve. One hundred woody individuals were treated with molasses (an energy supplement from sugarcane that has been proven to increase utilization of low quality forages) and the remaining one hundred individuals served as the control and were not exposed to the molasses treatment. The results of the Cramer's V statistical tests indicated that there were significant differences in utilization between the treated and non-treated woody individuals. It is therefore confirmed that molasses application will increase utilization pressure by browsers, particularly elephants.