

The Biological control of Weeds.

The first attempt to control a noxious weed by its natural enemies was made in the Hawaiian Islands in 1902. Since that time several countries have adopted Biological Control as a means of combating agricultural weeds on a large scale. Favourable results have been obtained in Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon and Hawaii.

Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to show whether these useful importations will in turn become pestilential. Feeding tests carried out on a few individuals over a comparatively short period of time, it may be argued, cannot tell us with certainty how the species will behave when hardput to it for a long period of time in a new environment especially seeing that many phytophagous parasites are not very highly specialised in habit and may prove to be somewhat plastic.

The Family Melastomaceae to which Clidemia hirta belongs is fortunately not closely related to any valuable plants; moreover one insect Liothrips urichi has been found to be specific to Clidemia hirta, so that one can be reasonably certain that the parasites of *C. hirta* will not turn their attentions to valuable crops.