

Controlling brush with a paint roller by Bill Kleiman April 25, 2016

Want to help control brush without the fuss or physical effort of carrying a Birchmeier backpack sprayer?

Below are photos of our new paint rollers being used as herbicide applicators. We have four of them. The herbicide is Garlon 4 brush herbicide diluted at 17% in mineral oil with a red dye. There is no water involved. Do not add water or get rain in the bucket because it turns the oil solution to a pudding like mix.

Caution: Do not apply this herbicide when you have “good” plants within about a foot of the brush you are trying to kill. The herbicide can kill the plants you like, maybe spring ephemerals, or prairie plants in a few ways. One way is you could drip some herbicide on the plants. Or the herbicide is oil based and vaporizes and those vapors may injure plants close. So, when plants have emerged in the spring, be wary of using basal bark oil where good plants are located. Instead, use the basal bark area in those good areas when plants are still winter dormant, and apply it carefully. The label says don’t use the oil in temperatures over 70 degrees. Of course, in low quality areas there won’t be off target concerns.

We have 2.5 gallon jugs of the Ready To Use herbicide mix. You simply pour about a half inch of herbicide mix in the bottom of the bucket. Dip in the roller. Then roll the roller on the paint screen that is in the bucket. You should get very little dripping if you roll on the screen enough.

We keep all these basal bark supplies in the Morton on the north wall. Don’t store these in the HQ barn because that is where we store the blue colored water based herbicides.

For honeysuckle, roll a band of a few inches around each plant stem. Usually I do this within a foot of the ground. If I don’t get all sides of each stem I accept this and keep going. For bigger brush or trees roll on more herbicide.

This works for all our shrubs and woody plant problems. Remember do not kill something if you are not confident of what it is.

For cut stems you just roll on the herbicide.

There are advantages of applying herbicide to the bark without cutting the plant, called basal bark application: It is faster, safer, quieter, cheaper, and just as effective in killing. We did a controlled experiment and found basal application had 100% kill on honeysuckle. This oil based herbicide will act on the plant for months. Don’t look in a week for a big response, instead, look after a year.

Thank you to Kirk Hallowell for shopping and donating the new roller setups.

Let’s go get after that brush.

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Photos follow:



