# **Herbicide Applicator Dauber Wand**

Herbicides are often the quickest way to get rid of **invasive plant species** biological pollution. This document gives instructions for how to make an herbicide applicator (dauber) (wand) from materials easily available in North America. It is easy to carry in the field through the brush: a wand in one hand, and <u>folding-saw</u> (or <u>from the manufacturer</u> with 20% Discount Code=**joegardener20** according to <u>this podcast</u> > Play at 59:33) or <u>pruners</u> in the other. This design works better than commercial models I have seen — compared to the wand in the picture below, this design holds more, drips less, and involves less stooping.

I have used the wand, to good effect (<u>results available on request</u>), using <u>application methods</u>:

- Cut-Stump or Cut-and-Paint — cut invasive close to ground, daub remaining surface with herbicide.
- Basal Bark no-cut; coat stem of invasive, 360°, from ground to 18" high (about knee-high).

These are great alternatives to:

- Hack-and-squirt.
- Drill and drop or drill-n-kill.
- Glove of Death you wear chemical-gloves, with cotton gloves over, dip in herbicide, wipe over invasive.

About 1 m long, it holds enough herbicide for an **hour or two** of daubing, or **three or four hours** of cutting and daubing. Empty, it



weighs 1.1 kg (2.4 pounds), full 1.4 kg (3.1 pounds), in-use average 1.2 kg (2.7 pounds). Your first wand costs about **US\$57** to build, with subsequent wands about **\$32**. Add something to that for taxes, extra pipe you can't use, mileage and labor.

# 1 Important Note!

- $\Box$  Some trees can be killed by mechanical mean without herbicide by:
  - o **Pulling slowly with gloved hand** if smaller around than a pencil.
  - o **Girdling**, using (A) a <u>folding-saw</u>, (B) a chainsaw, or (C) <u>The Ringer tree girdler</u> (video of tree girdler in use, for 5 seconds, from 52-57 sec).
  - o **Treepullers** such as Weed Wrench, <u>Extractigator</u>, or PullerBear.
- In the USA, a state pesticide license is required to:
  - (A) Mix herbicide with other agents including water! -OR-
  - o (B) Put the herbicide in anything other than the original container including this wand!

If you need to do either of these tasks, have someone on your team get such a license.

- o Getting a Michigan Commercial Certified Pesticide Applicator License. TODO: Source, tighten writing.
- □ I recently found a user who prefers a simple solution -- easier to fill, easer to clean -- Buckthorn Blaster™.
- I am considering trying a 1-quart (liter) spraybottle with an old sock zip-tied to a stick. *If this works,* cleanup should simplified wipe the spray tip, and dispose of the old sock and bottom part of the stick.
- If you are a **homeowner** or otherwise find the above **too much trouble**:
  - o (A) Ignore all other sections of this document. -AND-
  - (B) Use a ready-to-use product from its original container.

In accordance with its label, of course — the label is the law!

A product I have seen used to good effect, even on tough invasive species:

Ready-to-use 5-liter jug with spray wand, 1% glyphosate + 0.1% triclopyr triethylamine salt.

- Product may be marked Roundup brand Poison Ivy Plus Tough Brush Killer, but I have seen the same branding on product of lesser content. Read the fine print — check the contents, not the branding! About US\$26 at Ace, HD and Meijer.
- I have seen about 96% kill rate on the very-tough <u>Japanese knotweed Fallopia japonica</u> using **drill** and **fill**: in this case, cut below second node (about knee-cap-high) and spray product into the bamboo-like chamber. In a few weeks, you need to return to eliminate survivors, but this organization was set for that, and found this process works for them.
- o Same product in a **0.7 liter** spray bottle. About \$12 in the same stores. About 15 **x** the cost per volume of the above. But if you are a homeowner and this is all you need, this is the proper buy.
- o I had seen a product at 2-3 x this concentration (2% glyphosate + 0.3% triclopyr). But in 2017-June, I could not find it. Either I was mistaken or this product is no longer available.
- o I heard one group always uses wetland-approved herbicide formulations, so they are never stuck out at the site with the wrong mix. They also add Cygnet surfactant (also wetland-approved), and a marker dye colorant, such as Monterey Mark-It Blue. (Except when going after some tough plants that they have previously propane torched, where they use non-wetland surfactant Spyfe to burn through their waxy cuticles.)

# 2 Document History



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- Original design by the wand's inventor, Jack McGowan-Stinski, Land Steward, The Nature Conservancy, Michigan Chapter, 1998-10-28, retrieved 2012-10-01 by Eric Piehl.
- □ Adapted by **Barry Meyers-Rice**, of TNC's Wildland Invasive Species Program, 2000-04-05, retrieved 2013-01-07 by Eric Piehl, found to be no longer on Internet on 2013-05-27.
- □ Reengineered and totally rewritten, based on my experience building these, by <u>Eric Piehl</u>, 2013-05-12 to 2013-10-04.
- ☐ A colleague pointed me to <u>another write-up of a similar design</u>, retrieved 2014-01-06 by Eric Piehl.

For date this file last updated, please see page footer. For information on </> programming or \$\frac{1}{4}\$ other green subjects, please see a list of <a href="mailto:this document's sister docs">this document's sister docs</a>.

**TODO:** Analyze other write-up above. **TODO:** Refer (and link?) to MSDS Material Safety Data Sheets.

**TODO:** Improve cleaning instructions. **TODO:** Improve costing. **TODO:** Record time to build.

**TODO:** Hack layout pic, incl. labels and assembly centerlines. **TODO:** Hack punch pic, showing sharpened end.

TODO: Add link to info on invasive plant species "biological pollution". TODO: Add link to ICSN/invasives.html.

**TODO:** Add usage info (what herbicide works on what plant, what doesn't, <u>MNFI BCP sheets</u> (<u>MDNR</u> or www.michigan.gov/invasivespecies > click "Species Profiles - Plants"), <u>Nature Conservancy's "Weed Control Methods Handbook: Tools & Techniques for Use in Natural Areas"</u>, <u>MISIN</u> > Species Information, etc.)

**TODO:** General-Use v Restricted-Use Herbicides, certified pesticide applicator v volunteers, vest, 5-point signs. **TODO:** Try punch copper tubing 1½" nominal dia,, rigid not soft, type K or L, grind OD leaving cut surface on ID.

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#### 3 How to Use the Wand

- Remove **sponge tip E**, and use a **paperclip** or wire to clear the <u>holes in **flow diaphragm D**</u>.
- □ If **sponge tip E** gets **worn** or disgusting, replace it with a spare. Put tip back on the wand.
- Close valve B (turn handle perpendicular to pipe). Mark wand "Herbicide" or more specific.
- Prepare your herbicide-mix in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and your state's DEQ, preferably with enough dye to check for leaks, monitor applications, and identify any exposure to operator.
- With **plug A** up, unscrew the fill port. Should have been hand-tight.
- □ Pour **herbicide-mix** into main reservoir **A**.
- Replace the **plug**, hand-tight, with rubber gasket or Teflon tape keeping the connection sealed.
- Go to your first invasive. If **Cut and Paint**, cut down ankle-high with your incredibly-sharp folding saw.
- Open valve B (turn handle parallel to pipe) to let herbicide enter the sponge reservoir C and D. Wait about 23 seconds. [The original instructions say you may need to loosen the fill-cap to let air into the main reservoir, but I find not.]
- Once the **sponge tip E** begins to saturate, **Close valve B**. [And if necessary, retighten the fill plug.]



- Touch **sponge tip E** to the (1) **cut-stump**, enough for a nice coating on the (if small) entire surface or (if large) the cambium layer perimeter between the bark and wood; or (2) **basal bark**, 360° around the plant, everything under 18" (on me, below my kneecap). A light touch, enough to cover, is enough.
- □ When **sponge tip E** no longer has enough herbicide, crack open **valve B** again.
  - If that doesn't work, check for herbicide-mix remaining in the main reservoir (slosh it back and forth). If that doesn't work, remove **sponge tip E**, and use a **paperclip** or wire to clear the <u>holes in **flow**</u> <u>diaphragm D</u>.
- □ With 20% glyphosate, works down to **-5°C 24°F**. If **cold** makes herbicide-mix more viscous or freeze: (1) clean and drill larger holes, or (2) tape disposable chemical hand-warmer around **flow diaphragm** section **D**.
- ☐ If **sponge tip E** gets **worn** or disgusting, replace it with a spare.
- When **done** for a while, **Close valve B**, and store with **sponge tip E** pointing **up**. In a 5-gallon bucket, perhaps. But do not allow contents to remain under **extreme temperatures**.
- When **done for the day**, **Close valve B**, pour the extra herbicide back into proper container, discard **sponge tip E**, **Open valve B**, rinse out in accordance with the **herbicide manufacturer's instructions** and your state's **DEO**, and let dry. Do not allow herbicide-mix remain in very hot or freezing conditions.

# 4 Capacity

You can **adjust** the capacity of herbicide you carry, by cutting a **longer** or **shorter** long pipe. Decide the capacity of herbicide you need:

| Capacity<br>(1" pipe) | Capacity<br>(1" pipe) | Len of Main<br>Reservoir A | Notes  |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|
| 7 oz.                 | 0.21 l                | 15"                        | Original design says 12-15". I think that is a little short.   |
| 8 oz.                 | 0.24 l                | 17"                        | This size stores fully-assembled inside Sterilite vertical wrapping paper box.   |
| 10 oz.                | 0.30 l                | 21"                        |  |
| 12 oz.                | 0.35 I                | 25″                        | I like this, to <b>extend field time</b> and <b>use standing upright</b> . Wands this size store fully-assembled inside <u>Sterilite 67-qt Wheeled Latch Box</u> . |
| 0.48 oz.<br>/ inch    | 0.014 l /<br>inch     | box inside<br>length – 14" | If you have a box or drum in which to keep your wands, fully-assembled.  |

If you find a **container with lid** maybe 1 m (32-40") high and 30-40 cm (16") in diameter, that will fit inside my hatchback, please <u>let me know!</u> Especially if I can fit several wands in it, **filled**, **ready-to-go**, with a bottle of herbicide in the bottom. [I hear that around Christmastime, Target has one for <u>storing wrapping paper</u>; I will check. The <u>Rubbermaid 3K06</u> looks interesting, but is too expensive and unavailable.]

[I have experimented with using pipes of size *other* than  $\mathbf{1''}$ .  $\mathbf{11/2''}$  pipe is not worth it — not lighter, not easier to carry, just makes it more complex to build. I doubt  $\mathbf{11/4''}$  pipe is any better. But if you want to try it, I have specs for this in an old version of this doc.]

#### 5 Tools List

In hardware store, **plumbing** PVC polyvinyl chloride area: Total about \$25 1—kit containing 1 can each of PVC (A) purple primer and (B) cement. (If Oatey, MSDS1 MSDS2.) \$5-7 ... and if you are making multiple units ...  $\Box$  **1—plastic-pipe cutter.** Must be for pipe diameter  $\geq$  **1"**. If you buy one, don't buy the cheapest. \$15 1-pipe diameter=1¼", wall thickness Schedule 40, length=8" or so. Can use metal. \$5 In hardware store, **other areas**, acquire additional tools: □ 1—drill, with bits: ¾" (spade bit tolerable, helical bits should work better), and 1/16" [I have seen commercial units drilled 5/64", but that runs too much]. 1—vise or big Channellock standoff pliers. PPE personal protective equipment: eye protection, leather gloves, etc. 1—Sharpie or other permanent marker that can mark plastic. **Black** OK. **Green** and **red** are nice. scrap lumber ... and if you are making only one unit ... 1—your old hacksaw and [utility knife or coarse file] will work to cut and de-burr pipe. □ **1**—ruler and scissors (to cut sponge).

#### 6 Parts List

In hardware store, paint and bathroom areas, acquire additional parts:

Total about \$32

- Optional container:
  - **1—5-gallon bucket**. Home Depot has buckets everywhere, but lids only in paint area.
- \$4
- **1**—<u>Sterilite vertical wrapping paper box</u>. Stores wands (barrel up to 17") fully assembled, protecting car. **1**—<u>Sterilite 67-qt Wheeled Latch Box</u>. Stores wands (up to 1 m) fully assembled, protecting inside of car.
- **1**—<u>Sterilite 20-gal Latch Tote</u>. Stores wands (barrel up to 23½") fully assembled, protecting inside of car.
- 4—rubber bathroom lavatory drain "Mack washer" gaskets, inner diameter=1¼". \$5

  Outer diameter and thickness don't matter. Verify that the gaskets fit and seal on the threaded-male fittings you select below these are to seal four threaded hand-tightened joints.

  If your store has only 2 or 3 gaskets, get a roll of Teflon tape for the joints that aren't opened regularly. [I have seen commercial units with no gaskets, with Teflon tape on all four joints, but I don't like that works OK for two Open/Close cycles, then leaks.]
- 1—sponge, heavy duty cellulose ("o-cel-o" brand OK) at least 1½" thick (8 X 4 X 1½" makes 8 tips). \$4

In hardware store, **plumbing** PVC polyvinyl chloride area, acquire per applicator (if any of these are missing, replace with any functionally-equivalent combination of items):

**TODO**: Try slip joints instead of threaded [suggested by crew chief]

□ 1—pipe diameter=1", wall thickness Schedule 40, long enough to cut into:

\$5

- 1—piece of length= 25" or as adjusted above in Capacity, plus
- 2—pieces of length= 2" [I have seen commercial units with each 3½", but I like 2"].
- **1—ball valve**, threaded-female/threaded-female, diameter=**1**". **TODO**: Try **2** [sug. by crew chief] \$12 \$6
  Go through all of them, choosing those with the **biggest** and **easiest-turning handles**.
- **1—plug**, threaded-male, diameter=**1**". **TODO**: Try **0** [sug. by crew chief] \$0 \$1.49

  If multiple varieties, choose those with a **big hex** or square you can **grip with your hand**.
- 1—cap, threaded-female, diameter=1". \$1.49

  If multiple varieties, choose those with a big hex or square you can grip with your hand.
- □ **1**—**cap**, **slip**-female, diameter=<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (yes, this is smaller you are going to cut it up). \$0.59
- **3—couplings**, slip-female/threaded-male, diameter=**1**". *TODO: Try 4* [sug. by crew chief] \$3.56 \$2.67
- **1—coupling**, slip-female/threaded-female, diameter=**1"**. **TODO**: Try **0** [sug. by crew chief] \$0 \$1
- 1—coupling, 45° angle elbow, slip-female/slip-female, diameter=1". \$1.49
- 1—if you can't get enough rubber lavatory gaskets above, get one roll of Teflon tape.

\$1



## **Assembly Instructions**

Lay out all your parts and tools, as in the photo above.

For glue steps below, follow **glue/primer manufacturer instructions** (if Oatey, intro dir1 dir2 MSDS1 MSDS2), including excellent ventilation to outside. I prefer my driveway. Steps are presented from back to front (left to right in these photos). However, if mosquitos are bad, you can do "outside" steps together, then complete inside.

## 7.1 Cut Pipe (build outdoors or indoors)

- □ Cut the PVC pipe:
  - 1—long pipe dia=1", length=a foot or two or three (decided above in section <u>Capacity</u>).
    2—short pipes dia=1", length=2" [I have seen commercial units cut at 3½", but I like 2"].

  - I like using a plastic-pipe cutter. If you don't have one, cut pipe square with a hacksaw, and de-burr with utility knife or coarse file, inside and out.



## 7.2 Main Reservoir A (build outdoors)

- □ **TODO**: Try making this another valve, with a slip ioint [suggested by crew chief]. Mark, perhaps with a Sharpie pen, the outside of the valve with position (1) OPEN or FILL, and (2) CLOSED or TRANSPORT/APPLY.
- Onto the long pipe A, prime and cement the one slip**female/threaded-female coupling** (the slip-female-side).
- Onto the **other end** of **long pipe A**, prime and cement one of three slip-female/threaded-male couplings (slip-female-side).



### 7.3 Main Reservoir A to Valve B (can delay build until you are indoors)

Examine **ball valve B**. Notice the external handle turns an internal sphere, with a hole drilled through it. Turn the handle to where the hole just starts to be exposed. **Mark**, perhaps with a Sharpie pen, the outside of the valve position (1) **OPEN** (next time, I intend to try **APPLY**) under the current position of the handle, so later you know where the valve starts to Open, and (2) **CLOSED** (next time, I intend to try

Topo: Try making this a slip joint [suggested by crew chief]. Onto the threaded-male fitting exposed in the previous step, place a rubber gasket over the male threads. Shown in photo: If you don't have enough rubber gaskets, wind some Teflon tape (a) start along the outside tip, rolling with the threads around twice or more as needed to cover the threads, (b) pull on the tape until it stretches and breaks, in such a way as to hold it on until you .... Screw the fitting

TRANSPORT/FILL) where fully-Closed.

tight.
Onto the **threaded-male plug**, place a **rubber gasket** over the male threads [I have seen commercial units that use **Teflon tape** instead — works OK for a

into one side of the ball valve B, hand-

couple Open/Close cycles, then leaks], and place into the **threaded-female** fitting exposed four steps above

When hand-tightened, the rubber gasket or Teflon tape should keep the connection sealed.



# **7.4 Flow diaphragm D (build outdoors or indoors)**

Depending upon the details of the way your PVC fittings were molded, you may have to innovate this part of construction.

- □ In the ¾" slip-female cap, with a 1/16" drill bit [I have seen commercial units drilled 5/64", but that runs two much], drill two holes through its face, somewhere in the middle half.
- Cut away the barrel-part of the coupling, leaving it looking like a large shirt-button.
- Insert it into the second of three **slip-female/threaded-male couplings** (the slip-female-side). It should slide inside snugly. If not, cut or file your button until it does.



# 7.5 Sponge Reservoir C-D (build outdoors)

- Prime and cement in place <u>flow</u> <u>diaphragm</u> <u>D</u>, as far inside the coupling as you can.
- Right behind your **button**, prime and cement one of your **short pipes**.
- On the other end of this short pipe, prime and cement the 45° angle elbow coupling C.
- On the other end of this 45° angle elbow coupling C, prime and cement the second short pipe.



### 7.6 Sponge Reservoir C-D to Valve B (can delay build until you are indoors)

- Onto the third of three slip-female/threaded-male couplings (the threaded-male side), place a rubber gasket over the male threads.
  - Shown in photo: If you don't have enough rubber gaskets, wind some Teflon tape.
- □ Screw the fitting into the other side of the **ball valve B**, hand-tight.

### 7.7 Sponge Reservoir C-D (build outdoors)

□ Into this **slip-female/threaded-male coupling** (the slip-female-side), prime and cement the other end of the **short pipe** from two steps above, ending with the bend **C** pointing **away** from the valve control.

## 7.8 Sponge Tip E (part one) (build outdoors or indoors)

- On the **threaded-female cap**, in the center of the face, **drill** a **34**" diameter hole. Hold cap in a vise; or with leather gloves and big Channellock standoff pliers, backed up by scrap lumber.
- □ Make a **sponge tip E**, by cutting from the heavy-duty sponge a square or columnar chunk, about **1½**" in diameter. If the sponge is dry, you might find that the **plastic-pipe cutter** works well.

| sponge<br>size<br>(square)<br>(in) | sponge size<br>(cylinder<br>diameter)<br>(in) | cross-<br>section<br>(sq in) | Notes  |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| 0.89                               | 1.00  | 0.79                         | [Original instructions, but I find it leaks too much.]   |
| 1                                  | 1.13  | 1.00                         |  |
| 1.25                               | 1.41  | 1.56                         |  |
| 1.33                               | 1.50  | 1.77                         | I find this <b>best</b> : does not leak, but lets fluid out when you press sponge. Is a little tough to install. |
| 1.5                                | 1.69  | 2.25                         | <u> </u>   |

It should fit snugly in the hole in the previous step's **threaded-female cap**. It should **some moderate effort** to insert the sponge.

To make this easier, **wet** the sponge, and start with an **edge**. If this were easy, it would leak in use.

At bottom (after leak-checking and so on), are instructions for cutting **lots of sponge tips**.

Onto the **wand's** only-remaining exposed **threaded-male** fitting, place a **rubber gasket** over the male threads [I have seen commercial units that use **Teflon tape** instead — works OK for a couple Open/Close cycles, then leaks]. Screw the fitting into the **threaded-female sponge-tip E** made in the previous step.



When hand-tightened, the rubber gasket or Teflon tape should keep the connection sealed.

#### 7.9 Complete, test and practice

□ To let the cement harden and vapors disperse, Open valve **B**, remove cap **E** and plug **A**, and set aside for a few hours.



- Verify you can fit a paperclip or wire through the holes in flow diaphragm D if not, drill them out again.
- Leak-check and practice using the unit:
  - o Close **Valve B**, Open **Cap A**, fill with water, Close **Cap A**. Dry any water on the wand. Take outside, and shake vigorously. Leaking threads with a **rubber gasket** probably need tightening or the gasket moved downward. *Leaking threads with Teflon tape probably need tightening or rewrapping.*
  - When good, Open Valve B, hold tip-down. The sponge tip should become wet in 15-45 seconds.
     Practice treating something with the sponge tip it should be easy to paint it completely wet, but not too wet. Shake front end moderately, and handle any leaks.
  - o When good, remove Cap A, remove sponge tip E, Open Valve B, and set out all to dry.
- Make a label, and cover written side in clear packing tape, holding to the barrel, or cover in tape and punch a hole and tie it on, or write on the barrel "Herbicide" with what you will probably be using.
- □ Tape or attach a **paperclip** or wire, to be used later (if needed) to clear holes in **flow diaphragm D**.
- Use as <u>at top</u>. Happy hunting!

## **7.10** Sponge Tip E (part two) (build outdoors or indoors)

□ Now that you have one **sponge tip** that works, cut out a few more — you will need them.

However, if you are making more than five sponge tips:



Make a **punch**. Since <u>testing above</u> found a **1½**" cylinder of sponge to be optimal, I wanted to make a punch of that size. Consulting <u>charts</u>, I found that **1½**" would be **right in the middle** of **1¼**" plastic pipe. I thus acquired a length of **8**" or so of **1¼**" plastic pipe, and sharpened **one** end **half-to-the-outside** (using a grinding wheel in a drill), and **half-to-the-outside** (using a hand file).

[The original instructions said to make from **metal**; I suspect that is faster to **use**, but slower to **make**.

**TODO**: Try <u>copper tubing</u> **1½"** <u>nominal dia.</u>, rigid not soft, type K or L, and grind OD leaving cutting surface on ID.]

- □ To **use** punch, sandwich from the top down:
  - hammer or handsledge,
  - o scrap lumber,
  - punch (sharp end down),
  - sponge (fresh-out-ofthe-wrapper or wet-andwrung-out worked for me, not dry),
  - o scrap lumber,
  - o driveway.



With my plastic punch, I can punch out sponge tips with a half-dozen hammer-blows each. No need to remove each sponge tip — you can wait until you have cut holes in the whole sponge before poking out the whole stack with a stick.



#### 8 Labels

**TODO**: Rewrite this section--needs a massive update.

As part of section Complete, test and practice, for each wand, print a label, write the owner, and:

- cover written side in clear packing tape, holding it to the barrel, wrapping a rubber band to indicate its contents, or
- □ cover both sides in clear packing tape, punch a hole, and tie onto the barrel somewhere.

#### **Herbicide Applicator Dauber Wand**

contains one of (mark with rubber band) (cleanout wire under tape):

empty and clean

other

22% glyphosate + 3% triclopyr

27% triclopyr ester Garlon 4 "CWC Michigan Blend"

27% glyphosate "RoundUp"

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