

BANDIT'S 15XPC DRUM CHIPPER

Recently we tested a Bandit Intimidator 15XPC Drum Chipper, a true 15 inch chipper with the infeed system and engine power of the big 1590XP/18XP in a chipper the size of Bandit's 12 inch model.



There have been a lot of ripples across the Australian Arborists' pond of late, the source of which seems to be a Bandit chipper. After some investigation we discovered that Bandit listened to what its customers wanted and has developed a 'hybrid' chipper made up of some of the best parts of two existing, popular and proven units: the 12XP and the 18XP. The result is the Bandit 15XPC, which I have affectionately nicknamed Frankenchipper.

So what has the 15XPC got? Firstly it is a true 15 inch capacity wood chipper with an infeed opening of 15 inches high and 20 inches wide.



Starting from ground up, the Bandit sits on a single, heavy duty spring axle with electric brakes. The chassis is a stronger version of the 12XP's frame, made of rectangular steel tubing, not just C section steel. The 24 inch diameter drum is also the same size as the 12XP but used to maximum capacity, and is held down with the same oversized bearings from the 18 inch Bandit. Also taken from the 18XP are the larger feed rollers and feed roller motors, resulting in a heap more pulling power than the 12XP.

The 15XPC is powered by a 142hp CAT turbo diesel engine (the same as the 18XP) with full Murphy engine protection

and Autofeed Plus. This is a whole lot of wood chipper in a package 2.1m wide by 5.3m long and the answer to everyone's question: it weighs just 3400kg.

Some other features of the 15XPC, which are standard across most of the Bandit range, include:

- Hood pin switch
- Twin disc clutch
- Hydraulic bump bar (no electric switches!)
- E-stop switches at the rear
- High infeed sides
- Hydraulic winch
- Rope shear device for added safety
- And of course where would you be without the old faithful Lift and Crush?

To sum up the 15XPC, you're getting a true 15 inch chipper with all the strength and power of the proven 1590/18XP in a chipper the size of the 12 inch that can be towed legally behind most modern 4WD utes.

So how does it perform? I must admit, I did prompt *The Australian Arbor Age* magazine to get hold of the 15XPC for a test drive as I was just as excited as the next guy to get my hands on one to give it a thrashing.

My job for the day of the test drive was a pretty straightforward tree removal; the access was good, albeit blocking a small laneway with the truck and chipper. There was an open building site next door with enough space to rig out some decent sized pieces of tree and stack them in a tidy fashion, ready for when we brought the truck and chipper in.

The first part of the chipping pile was comprised of nice straight branches with four of us feeding the machine. It outperformed our efforts with ease, the larger feed rollers making hand feeding a piece of cake.

Next up there were some larger branches and timber which we left as big as possible to give the 15XPC a suitable challenge.

We used the winch to pull a capacity sized log up to the chipper and it was pulled into the rollers with absolute ease. The 142hp Turbo CAT did its thing and in no time at all this 6 meter log found its new temporary home in the back of the truck. We were all amazed at the potency of this "little" Bandit chipper. This thing has amazing grunt!

We purposely left some of the larger branches untrimmed to see how it would cope, sure that at least one or two of the gnarlier limbs would not comply. However, it turned out this wasn't the case. The extra pulling power supplied from those larger feed roller motors certainly did the trick, bullying the wider junction branches into line! We all gave it the big thumbs up.

Frankenchipper certainly performed well, and at just 3400kg its compact, powerful and light; perfect if you want to upgrade your chipper but don't want to upgrade your truck as well.

The big chipper for the little guy or the little chipper for the big guy? You decide.

For more information visit banditchippers.com.au