



Garden plants and bushland invaders



This brochure identifies some of the major weeds in the City of Stirling, including plants that are commonly found in gardens and nurseries.

What is a weed?

Generally, a weed is a plant growing in the wrong place and has an adverse impact on the environment. Responsible gardening can keep weeds in our environment under control.

Weeds smother native plants or prevent them from growing by competing for available nutrients, water, space and sunlight. They affect native animal populations by reducing the availability of their natural food sources and habitat.

Once away from their natural environments and free from the pests or diseases that would normally control them, these plants are able to establish and thrive.

How do weeds impact on the environment, the economy and people?

Weeds can be very difficult to remove and may spread rapidly. Weeds can:

- change, take over or destroy natural ecosystems
- degrade recreational areas; cause health problems such as poisoning and allergies for people and animals
- increase weed control and maintenance costs for local government, which are then passed on to ratepayers.

How do weeds spread?

Many of today's weeds were introduced to Australia as **garden plants** and have since "escaped" into the natural environment.

Weeds can spread in many ways, such as:



Birds

Birds eat fruit and seed, which they carry to nearby bushland. Birds can carry weed seeds many kilometres.



Humans and Animals

Weed seeds from the garden can be carried to bushland on your clothing and shoes, or on your pet's fur. Check your clothing and footwear after walking through weedy areas. Dogs and cats can pick up seeds on their coats and spread weeds, so check them too.

Dumped garden cuttings and lawn clippings in local bushland can lead to infestations of unwelcome garden weeds such as couch and kikuyu grass. Once established, they are very difficult to remove.



Wind

Wind can blow seeds many kilometres. For example, Gazania (African Daisy) can produce 1,000 seeds per plant and be carried more than 3 kilometres.



Water

Seeds and plant fragments including bulbs, corms and dumped garden waste can wash down stormwater drains to other areas.

How do I prevent garden weeds from becoming bushland invaders?

We all have to be responsible for weed problems. Here are a few ways to control the spread of weeds:

Remove weed species from your garden.

When selecting plants, check if the plants you have chosen are in this booklet. Plants that are not invasive are a good choice for your garden – ask your council or local nursery for recommended alternatives.

Dispose of garden waste responsibly.

Never dump it! Place it on your verge when your next green waste collection is scheduled and it will be treated and turned into compost. Alternatively, you could shred and compost the garden waste yourself.

Keep weeds out of waterways.

Sweeping garden waste into the drain spreads weeds through waterways, which can become clogged with weed species such as Typha, Bacopa, Couch Grass and Arum Lilies.

Join a local friends of group.

These groups work with the City to eradicate environmental weeds and their impacts. Find out more about joining local groups from the City's Conservation Officer on (08) 9205 8555.

Declared Weeds of National Significance

A declared plant is a weed species that has been targeted for control because it can cause significant agricultural, environmental and social impacts. Declared weed species are controlled by legislation as per the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*.

You can learn more at:

www.agric.wa.gov.au/pests-weeds-diseases/weeds/declared-plants

www.florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/weeds/swanweeds/

The following pages contain information on the most common, invasive weeds in the City of Stirling.



Arum Lily
(*Zantedeschia aethiopica*)

A tuber-like perennial that is highly invasive and a serious threat to wetlands, lakes, creeks, and drains. All parts of the plant are toxic.

Control measures – hand pull plants taking care to remove all bulbs below ground level as they can reshoot.



South African Cornflag
(*Chasmanthe floribunda*)

Cornflag has flower spikes with yellow, red or purple flowers up to 1cm. It is highly invasive in bushlands, creeks and drains.

Control measures – hand pull or dig out plants before seeds set, taking care to remove all bulbs below ground level as they can reshoot.



Pampas Grass
(*Cortaderia selloana*)

A long-lived perennial that grows in a large clumping tussock. It can grow to a height of 4m with tall flower heads that are cream in colour. It rapidly colonises wetlands and lakes, forming dense infestations. Capable of altering native vegetation structure and decreasing diversity of native fauna.

Control measures – cut out small plants and remove uprooted plants to avoid them re-sprouting. Remove and bag flower heads. Slash/burn clumps.



Blackberry
(*Rubus fruticosus*)

A highly invasive creeper in bushlands and wetlands. Once established, it is very difficult to control.

Control measures – hand pull plants taking care to remove the entire root system as they can reshoot several metres from parent plant.



Onion Weed
(*Asphodelus fistulosus*)

A perennial with thin green hollow leaves growing from a mainly white bulb that gives off an onion smell when crushed. Flowers grow at the top of a long stalk and are mainly white. Very difficult to eradicate once established. It is highly invasive in bushlands and coastal dunes.

Control measures – dig out plant before seeds set, ensuring the entire plant and root system are removed as they can reshoot.



Rose Geranium
(*Pelargonium capitatum*)

Rose Geranium is a major weed of Banksia woodland and coastal dunes. Its dense coverage competes with native plants and prevents germination of their seed.

Control measures – hand pull plants before seeds set, taking care to remove the entire plant and root system as it can reshoot from below ground level.



Cape Tulip
(*Homeria flaccida*)

Originally introduced as a garden plant in the 1800s, Cape Tulip is a perennial bulb with orange to salmon pink flowers that are yellow in the centre. Highly invasive in bushlands, they out-compete native plants.

Control measures – hand pull plants before seeds set, taking care to remove all bulbs below ground level as they can reshoot.



Veldt Daisy
(*Osteospermum ecklonis*)

A woody perennial from South Africa that sends roots down from plant nodes. The large daisy blooms in winter and spring with bluish-white or purple flowers. Highly invasive in bushlands and wetlands

Control measures – hand pull plants before seeds set, taking care to remove the entire plant and root system as it can reshoot.



African Daisy
(*Gazania spp*)

Gazania is a tough, low-growing perennial with brightly coloured daisy-like flowers in bronze, yellow and orange tones. It produces abundant wind-blown seeds and spreads rapidly into bushlands and coastal dunes competing with natives.

Control measures – hand pull plants before seeds set, taking care to remove the entire plant and roots as it can reshoot from below ground level.



Black Flag
(*Ferraria crispa*)

A perennial that blooms in spring with purple-black flowers that produce a strong pungent scent. Spread by corms and pollination by flies. A highly invasive and serious threat to bushlands and coastal dunes.

Control measures – hand remove small populations. Sift soil to find all corms. It takes a number of years to control populations. Chemical spraying is ineffective due to the corms depth in soil.



Harlequin Flower
(*Sparaxis bulbifera*)

A perennial that blooms in spring with white-cream, yellow or purple flowers. It is highly invasive in bushlands.

Control measures – hand pull plants before seeds set, taking care to remove all bulbs below ground level as they can reshoot.



Bulbil Watsonia
(*Watsonia meriana*)

A tall perennial distinguished by clusters of egg-shaped bulbils on the stem. It is a major environmental weed of bushlands, particularly near water.

Control measures – hand pull plants before seeds set, taking care to remove all bulbs below ground level as they can reshoot.



Japanese Pepper
(*Schinus terebinthifolia*)

A commonly cultivated garden shrub that has semi-waxy green leaves with red berries in spring. Rapidly establishes itself in bushlands through root system and the spread of seed by birds and water.

Control measures – cut shrub at base immediately paint with a mixture of Garlon and diesel. May need to retreat as new seedlings reshoot from root system and seed.



Lantana
(*Lantana camara*)

A scrambling, prickly shrub or climber with a variety of colourful flowers blooming from January to September. Spreads by seed, root suckers and stem layering. Highly invasive in bushlands. It is a major weed pest in 60 countries and is considered one of the world's ten worst weeds.

Control measures – hand pull seedlings, ensuring removal of all root and stem material in contact with soil.



Pretty Betsy
(*Centranthus ruber*)

A sprawling perennial herb with pink flowers. Widely cultivated as an ornamental, it is highly invasive in bushlands. It is self-seeding and salt tolerant.

Control measures – hand pull before seeds set, ensuring all roots and stem fragments are removed from site.



Morning Glory
(*Ipomoea cairica*)

A highly invasive creeper in bushlands and wetlands that has thick green foliage with purple flowers that bloom in spring and summer.

Control measures – hand pull seedlings, ensuring removal of all root and stem material in contact with soil.



Lupin
(*Lupinus polyphyllus*)

Erect, multi-branched annual with blue/purple flowers. It is highly invasive in bushlands. It produces high levels of nitrogen that native plants are unable to tolerate. Seed bank in ground lasts 30-40 years.

Control measures – hand pull before seeds set, ensuring all roots and stem fragments are removed from site.



Pigs Face
(*Carpobrotus edulis*)

A prostrate, spreading, succulent with yellow and pink flowers. It is highly invasive in coastal dunes and bushland. It smothers native plants and suppresses their reproduction and growth.

Control measures – hand pull before seeds set, ensuring all roots and stem fragments are removed from site.



Geraldton Wax
(*Chamaelaucium uncinatum*)

Occurs naturally on the coastal (Quindalup) dunes around Geraldton. A cultivated variant has been widely planted and has escaped into many local bushlands. It can cause major structural changes to the native plant communities that it invades.

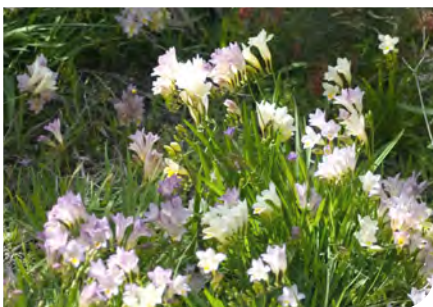
Control measures – hand pull seedlings before seeds set, ensuring entire root system is removed. Larger plants need to be dug out.



Victorian tea tree
(*Leptospermum laevigatum*)

A large shrub or tree with white flowers. It is highly invasive in coastal dunes and bushland. Many coastal areas of south-west WA are now seriously threatened by dense monocultures of Victorian tea-tree.

Control measures – hand pull seedlings and removed mature plants before seeds set. If there is re-sprouting, treat the stump and new shoots with a ‘tree and blackberry killer’ herbicide.



Freesia
(*Freesia alba*)

A cormous perennial with cream, white, yellow or purple flowers. It is highly invasive in bushlands. It smothers native plants and is difficult to eradicate.

Control measures – hand pull plants before seeds set, taking care to remove all bulbs below ground level as they can reshoot.






Lachenalia
(*Lachenalia aloides*)

Lachenalia is a bulbaceous, perennial, herb with yellow/orange or red flowers. It rapidly colonises in bushlands through the spread of seed and bulbs.

Control measures – hand pull plants before seeds set, taking care to remove all bulbs below ground level as they can reshoot.



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Telephone (08) 9205 8555 | **Enquiries** www.stirling.wa.gov.au/enquiries | **Web** www.stirling.wa.gov.au |    /citystirlingwa
This information is available in alternative formats on request. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre on (08) 9205 8555.