



Boneseed
Chrysanthemoides monilifera ssp. *monilifera*
ASTERACEAE
Origin: South Africa

Description:
A multi-branched shrub up to 3m high with upright woody stems.
Flowers: Bright yellow, 5 to 8 petals, 20-30mm diameter, clustered at the end of the branches, appearing in winter and spring.
Leaves: Leathery, prominent mid-vein, on short, thick stalks. Toothed edges, often covered with a white cottony down.
Fruit: Round green berries that ripen to black. Each fruit contains one smooth, hard, bone-coloured seed.

Notes:

- Dense thickets eliminate the growth of indigenous species.
- Fire sensitive but regenerates massively after burning.
- Birds are the main agents for seed dispersal.
- Plants are at least 18 months to 3 years old before flowering, remove younger plants before setting seed.
- Fire stimulates the growth of seedlings.

Similar native species: Juvenile Boneseed can be confused with seedlings of the native *Boobialla Myoporum insulare*. Boneseed seedlings are covered in a white downy hair.

Status: Weed of National Significance, Regionally Controlled Weed.

Weedy facts: One plant can produce up to 50,000 seeds per year and the seed can remain viable in the soil for over 10 years. Boneseed was originally introduced to prevent soil erosion in coastal and inland areas.

Weed treatment:



Cape Broom (Montpellier Broom)
Genista monspessulana FABACEAE
Origin: Europe

Description:
Forms dense stands of shrubs to 3m high. Stems are ribbed and covered with short hairs.
Flowers: Yellow pea-like flowers at the end of the branches in late winter to spring.
Leaves: The leaves are formed in 3 leaflets that are broadly oval. Upper surface is mid to dark green - underside is lighter.
Fruit: Brown or black flat narrow pods that are densely covered with hairs.

Notes:

- Similar to Flax-leaf Broom but with broader, flat-margined leaflets and leaves on short stalks.
- Often found on roadsides, disturbed areas and following fire.
- Can be a harbour for rabbits and other vermin.
- Is a prolific seeder, forming large seed banks that will remain in the ground for many years.

Status: Weed of National Significance, Regionally Controlled Weed.

Weedy facts: Cape Broom is the most widespread of several species of Broom that have invaded southern Australia.

Weed treatment:



Cape Wattle
Paraserianthes lophantha MIMOSACEAE
Origin: Native to Western Australia

Description:
A large shrub or small tree to 5m high. Stalks have prominent ridges.
Flowers: Greenish-yellow bottlebrush-like spikes in late winter and spring, with up to 4 spikes appearing in the leaf axil.
Leaves: Large, much-dissected, feathery leaves to 150mm long with up to 15 pairs of leaflets. Leaflets are silky downy underneath.
Fruit: Flowers are followed by large flat brown pods to 120mm long that split to expose the large black seeds.

Notes:

- Regarded as a major environmental weed in south-east of Australia due to its aggressive nature.
- Seeds prolifically - seeds are spread by birds, wind, water and dumped garden waste.
- Buried seed can remain viable in the soil for many years and potentially decades.
- Fire stimulates the growth of seedlings.

Similar native species: Black Wattle *Acacia mearnsii* and Silver Wattle *Acacia dealbata* may be mistaken for Cape Wattle when not in flower. No indigenous wattle has bottlebrush-like flowers.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weedy facts: Cape Wattle is not, as its name suggests, a wattle. It is however in the same family, Mimosaceae, so is a close relative.

Weed treatment:



Coast Tea-tree
Leptospermum laevigatum MYRTACEAE
Origin: Native to Coastal NSW and Victoria

Description:
A shrub or small tree to 4m high. The bark flakes in thin strips.
Flowers: Large white flowers to 20mm in diameter appear in late winter to early summer.
Leaves: Dull grey-green leaves. Flat, stiff, oval-shaped to 10mm wide with a small point.
Fruit: A deciduous, flat-topped, wrinkled cup-shaped capsule to 8mm across.

Notes:

- Has invaded areas since the 1983 bushfires, forming thickets on dunes and heathlands, and smothering all indigenous vegetation.
- Spread by wind, water, planting and in dumped garden waste.
- Hybridises with Silky Tea-tree to produce another weed.

Similar native species: Silky Tea-tree *Leptospermum myrsinoides* and Prickly Tea-tree *Leptospermum continentale*.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weedy facts: Coast Tea-tree is a very serious environmental weed when it establishes outside its natural range.

Weed treatment:



Flax-leaf Broom
Genista linifolia FABACEAE
Origin: Europe

Description:
Woody shrub to 3m forming dense stands. The ribbed stems are green and softly haired when young becoming greyish-brown and woody with age.
Flowers: Yellow pea flowers in tight clusters at the end of the branches in late winter to spring.
Leaves: The leaves are formed in 3 narrow leaflets that are dark green above, and silvery grey-green and hairy below. Margins are rolled under.
Fruit: Bears seeds in downy pods. Seeds mature in late spring-early summer and the pods become grey-black.

Notes:

- Highly invasive, can become dominant in disturbed or degraded areas.
- Prolific seeder forming large seed banks remaining in the ground for at least 10 years.
- Seed is dispersed by wind and animals.

Status: Weed of National Significance, Regionally Controlled Weed.

Weedy facts: Reproduces by seed with pods exploding to disperse up to 3m from the parent plant.

Weed treatment:



Honey-myrtle - Giant
Melaleuca armillaris MYRTACEAE
Origin: Native to eastern NSW and Gippsland

Description:
A large spreading shrub or tree to 6m high with firm, rough bark.
Flowers: Creamish yellow bottlebrush-like flower heads in a dense spike, about 30-70mm long and 20-30mm wide, appear in spring and summer.
Leaves: Slender with re-curved pointed tips.
Fruit: Capsules are 3-5mm wide - pointed to wavy on the capsule rim. They have quite a wide opening.

Notes:

- A very serious environmental weed as it is fast growing and quick to invade coastal heathlands, reserves and other areas.
- Seedlings are often seen growing along roadsides.
- Seed is dispersed by wind and water.

Similar native species: Giant Honey-myrtle can be confused with Moonah *Melaleuca lanceolata* an important indigenous plant. Flower spikes of this species are smaller, 20-40mm long and 15mm wide and capsules are urn-shaped with a constricted opening.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weed treatment:



Honey-myrtle - Mauve
Melaleuca nesophila MYRTACEAE
Origin: Western Australia

Description:
A bushy, fast-growing large shrub or small tree to 4m high.
Flowers: Pinkish-mauve terminal rounded flower heads tipped with gold appear during late spring and summer months.
Leaves: Deep green, shaped like a flattened circle. Young leaves are a much lighter green.
Fruit: Small, tightly-packed, chunky capsules that are persistent on the plant.

Notes:

- Mauve Honey-myrtle is one of the most widely cultivated *Melaleuca* species.
- Spreads easily from gardens into bushland reserves, displacing the indigenous vegetation.
- Seed is dispersed by wind and water.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weed treatment:



Honey-myrtle - Red
Melaleuca hypericifolia MYRTACEAE
Origin: Queensland and NSW

Description:
A spreading, loosely-branched shrub to about 2m high with drooping branches.
Flowers: Large, rusty red, bottlebrush-like flowers are concealed amongst the foliage in late spring and summer.
Leaves: Lance-shaped up to 40mm long. Sometimes turn red or have bronze tips in winter.
Fruit: Cylindrically-arranged seed capsules that are persistent on the plant, contain numerous fine seeds.

Notes:

- Serious problem plant, spreading easily from gardens into bushland reserves and displacing indigenous vegetation.
- Seed is dispersed by wind and water.
- Often forms dense thickets of new plants.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weed treatment:



Mirror-Bush
Coprosma repens RUBIACEAE
Origin: New Zealand

Description:
A large shrub or small tree to 5m high.
Flowers: Small creamy-white clusters of flowers are present during summer months.
Leaves: Glossy, deep green, rounded leaves, slightly notched at the tip and almost fleshy, are a familiar characteristic of this plant.
Fruit: Flowers are followed by orange-red berries.

Notes:

- A vigorous, salt-tolerant species that thrives in coastal areas where it has often been planted as a hedge or windbreak.
- Spreads along roadsides and into reserves where it tends to grow in dense clumps, eliminating indigenous species.
- Birds, particularly blackbirds, feed on the berries and spread the seed to new areas.
- In coastal dunes, the species can become almost prostrate and new plants will form where branches touch the ground.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weed treatment:



Myrtle-leaf Milkwort
Polygala myrtifolia var. *myrtifolia*
POLYGALACEAE
Origin: South Africa

Description:
An erect to spreading shrub to about 2m high.
Flowers: Clusters of pinkish-purple pea flowers on the ends of leafy branches all year round, although mainly in late winter to spring.
Leaves: Light green, broadly oval, tips rounded, to 40mm long.
Fruit: A flattened capsule to 10mm long, heart-shaped with a marginal wing, ripening from green to brown.

Notes:

- A very serious environmental weed.
- Forms large thickets, covering extensive areas and therefore excluding all indigenous vegetation.
- Seed remains viable in the soil for at least three years and germinates readily in both shade and full sun, forming dense carpets under adult plants.
- Dispersed by water, ants, birds and the dumping of garden waste.
- Polygala myrtifolia* var. *grandiflora* is also a weed in the district with larger flowers and the leaves are longer, tapering and a darker green.

Similar native species: Seedlings of Coast Beard-heath *Leucopogon parviflorus*.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weedy facts: A salt-tolerant species that thrives in Australian conditions, especially in the coastal, sandy soils where it builds up a large seed bank.

Weed treatment:

Top 20 Weeds
Anglesea to Eastern View

See also *Weeds of the Surf Coast Shire* which is available online at www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au



Trees & Shrubs



Sallow Wattle

Acacia longifolia subsp. *longifolia* MIMOSACEAE
Origin: Eastern Victoria and NSW

Description:

Sallow Wattle forms large dense shrubs or trees to 10 m high and 15m wide.

Flowers: Yellow flower spikes in late winter and spring.

Leaves: The phyllodes (leaves) are flat, thin, and pliable - up to 200mm long

Fruit: A pod with seeds. Pods are leathery, stiff and tough.

Notes:

- Sallow Wattle is one of the worst environmental weeds in the area.
- Sallow Wattle fills a naturally occurring void in local ecological vegetation communities. This species occupies "middle-storey" space. This influences fire behaviour by creating a ladder of vegetation, allowing the fire to move through the landscape.
- Sallow Wattle is a nitrogen fixer, altering the nutrient balance of the soil and affecting regeneration of indigenous vegetation.
- Seed is spread by birds.

Similar native species: Coast Wattle *Acacia longifolia* subsp. *sophorae* is native to coastal eastern Australia. In Surf Coast Shire, Coast Wattle is a medium spreading shrub to 5m high and is restricted to the dune system. The leaves are oval to rounded, thick and fleshy.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weedy facts: Hybrids (cross of species) between the indigenous Coast Wattle *Acacia longifolia* subsp. *sophorae* and Sallow Wattle are also very common environmental weeds in the area. These hybrids can take on many different forms and invade heathland and woodland environments.

Weed treatment:



Sweet Pittosporum

Pittosporum undulatum PITTOSPORACEAE
Origin: East Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland

Description:

Densely foliated evergreen tree or shrub to 14m high.

Flowers: Perfumed creamy-white flowers appearing in clusters in spring.

Leaves: Shiny and oval-shaped with wavy margins and a prominent mid-vein. They are arranged in whorls.

Fruit: Flowers of Sweet Pittosporum are followed by large berries that turn orange when ripe.

Notes:

- Spreads quickly to bushland reserves forming a dense canopy, excluding light to understory plants.
- High drought tolerance in shade – seedlings establish easily beneath canopy.
- Particularly invasive in damp gullies.
- The sticky seeds are eaten and dispersed to new areas by birds, especially currawongs, silvereyes and blackbirds.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weedy facts: *Pittosporum undulatum* hybridises with indigenous *Banyalla Pittosporum bicolor*, producing a hybrid weed.

Weed treatment:



Spanish Heath

Erica lusitanica ERICACEAE
Origin: Spain, Portugal and France

Description:

A shrub to 2.5m high with upright or arching stems.

Flowers: Masses of white or pink tubular flowers during winter and early spring.

Leaves: Tightly rolled leaves to 7mm long are crowded in whorls of 3 or 4.

Fruit: Seeds are produced during spring. Each fruit capsule contains up to 100 seeds.

Notes:

- An invasive plant spreading along roadsides and bushland reserves.
- Produces dense cover and prevents growth of indigenous plant species.
- Seeding is prolific and the small seeds are spread by water, wind, graders, slashing equipment and animals.
- Roots readily sucker.

Similar native species: Prickly Broom-heath *Monotoca scoparia*, Common Heath *Epacris impressa* and Peach Heath *Lissanthe strigosa*.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weed treatment:



Sweet Hakea

Hakea drupacea PROTEACEAE
Origin: Western Australia

Description:

Forms dense large shrubs to 4m high.

Flowers: Cream flowers appear in autumn.

Leaves: Narrow and divided into 2-8 segments up to 130mm long. Cylindrical and sharp-pointed.

Fruit: Woody, oval-shaped on a re-curved stalk. It is horned and covered with warts.

Notes:

- Sweet Hakea is commonly planted as a hardy, salt-tolerant shrub in coastal areas.
- Rapid grower, smothering indigenous vegetation and preventing regeneration.
- Seed is spread by wind, in dumped garden waste or in mulched vegetation.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weedy facts: Woody fruits are retained on the bush for long periods, usually opening only on the death of the branch that bears them.

Weed treatment:



Grasses



Serrated Tussock

Nassella trichotoma POACEAE
Origin: South America

Description:

A fine-leaved perennial tussock-forming grass to about 600mm high.

Flower/Seed head: The multi-branched seed head is up to 350mm long and at each junction there are two or three branches with a single seed on each branch. It has a weeping appearance when in full flower and changes in colour as it matures from purple through to gold. Spring flowering. **Seed:** Hard and small with a ring of white hairs at one end and a twisted tail (awn) 25mm long at the other end. The awn is attached off-centre to the seed.

Leaves: Blades are thin, up to 500mm in length, and tightly-rolled with small serrations which can be felt when running the leaf between the fingers from the tip to the base.

Notes:

- A major agricultural weed in the region that has also invaded native grasslands, pastures, grassy woodlands, roadsides and riparian areas.
- Large, vigorous plants can produce 100,000 seeds annually. Seed remains viable in the soil for 10-15 years.
- Seeds are easily spread by wind, machinery and vehicles, and by slashing, and also by adhering to animals, clothing and footwear.
- Ripe seed heads break off and disperse on winds for several kilometres.

Similar native species: Can be mistaken for native Tussock Grasses *Poa* sp., and Wallaby Grasses *Austrodanthonia* sp.

Status: Weed of National Significance, Regionally Controlled Weed.

Weed treatment:



Types of weeds

Weeds generally fall into one or more of the following three broad categories:

- Weeds of National Significance
- Declared Noxious Weeds (State Prohibited; Regionally Prohibited; Regionally Controlled; Restricted Weed)
- Environmental Weeds

weed treatment methods

This brochure identifies the recommended treatment methods for each specific weed as indicated by the icons below. More information about each method is contained in *Treating Weeds in Your Surf Coast Garden: Your guide to chemical and non-chemical methods*. Note that you should always seek professional advice in relation to using chemicals.

- Hand Removal/Pulling
Remove the weed via hand or mechanical means
- Cut Trunk and Stems
Saw or lop trunk and branches of weed
- Grubbing
Use a mattock to remove the weed and its roots
- Mulch/Smother
Place newspaper/cardboard over weeds and then mulch
- Ringbark
Chip a 2-5cm wide ring around the trunk of the weed
- Foliar Spray
Apply herbicide to the leaves of the weed
- Cut and Paint
Cut weed close to ground and immediately paint herbicide on cut surface (within 10-30 seconds)
- Scrape and Paint
Scrape bark of weed close to ground and paint with systemic herbicide
- Frilling
Use an axe to cut "frills" in trunk of weed and apply herbicide immediately to the frill

Herbs & Succulents



Agapanthus (African Lily)

Agapanthus praecox ssp. *orientalis* LILIACEAE
Origin: South Africa

Description:

Evergreen perennial herb growing in a leafy clump to 1m wide from a thick rhizome.

Flowers: Large blue or white flower heads on smooth, long, thick stems to about 1.2m high in summer.

Leaves: Glossy green, strap-shaped leaves form clumps up to 600mm high.

Fruit: Seed capsules release abundant glossy black winged seeds in late summer and autumn.

Notes:

- Commonly naturalises in a variety of coastal and inland situations where plants can often be seen growing along roadsides.
- Reproduction is by seed or dumped garden refuse.
- Seeds are wind and water dispersed, sometimes for many metres along drainage lines.

Similar native species: Black-anther Flax-lily *Dianella revoluta*.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weed treatment:



Wild Watsonia

Watsonia meriana 'Bulbillifera' IRIDACEAE
Origin: South Africa

Description:

A perennial, summer-dormant herb to 1m high with large underground corms and small stem bulbils.

Flowers: Salmon pink to orange-red trumpet-shaped, curved flowers to 70mm long appear in summer in flower spikes. The flower stalk is unbranched and bears 10-15 flowers.

Leaves: Basal leaves are sword-shaped and grow 500-800mm in length. They are rigid and strap-like. Stem leaves are much smaller and sheath-like.

Fruit: Seed capsules are rarely produced, but bulbils 6-7mm in diameter are produced in clusters on the lower part of the spike.

Notes:

- A very serious environmental weed capable of spreading rapidly by bulbils - particularly along roadsides and drainage lines.
- 1-3 new corms are formed above and beside the old corm each year.

Status: Regionally Controlled Weed.

Weed treatment:



Climbers and Creepers



Bluebell Creeper

Billardiera fusiformis PITTOSPORACEAE
Origin: Western Australia

Description:

A dense, tangled shrub to about 2m high, or twining climber to 3m or more. Juvenile plants do not climb, but after establishing their root system the plants quickly convert to the mature form. Young stems shiny reddish-brown.

Flowers: Nodding, deep blue bell-shaped flowers on slender stalks from spring to summer.

Leaves: Smooth dark green, narrowly oblong to lance-shaped. **Fruit:** Pendant, translucent grey-green sausage-shaped berries that darken as they ripen.

Notes:

- One of the Surf Coast Shire's most devastating environmental weeds.
- Large colonies, many metres wide, can be formed.
- Thrives in a wide range of environments, including coastal heath, heathland, woodland and forest.
- Birds disperse the seeds to new areas.

Similar native species: Common Apple-berry *Billardiera scandens*.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weed treatment:



Bridal Creeper

Asparagus asparagoides LILIACEAE
Origin: South Africa

Description:

A twining, climbing perennial herb to 3m high with branching wiry stems growing from underground water-storing tubers. It has annual aerial parts.

Flowers: Solitary small white flowers with a green stripe on each folding-back petal, appear in winter to spring.

Leaves: (Cladodes) Are dense shiny with a pointed tip. As fruit ripens the leaves yellow and fall.

Fruit: Red berries in spring and summer.

Notes:

- Recognised as one of the worst environmental weeds in the region, invading various vegetation types and soils.
- Forms huge masses of canopy over shrubs and trees, preventing regeneration.
- Produces a thick mat of underground tubers that prevents penetration of moisture.
- Dispersed by birds and also by dumping of roots as garden waste.

Similar native species: Apple-berry *Billardiera mutabilis*, Small-leaved Clematis *Clematis microphylla* and Climbing Lignum *Muehlenbeckia australis*.

Status: Weed of National Significance, Restricted Weed.

Weed treatment:



English Ivy

Hedera helix ARALIACEAE
Origin: Europe

Description:

A large woody climber attaching to trees, rocks and other surfaces by numerous fine stem roots. Horizontal stems root at the nodes when they contact the soil. This perennial evergreen grows to a height of 30m or more.

Flowers: Has small, yellowish-green flowers, star-shaped and usually in spherical clusters, in autumn.

Leaves: Glossy dark green on the upper surface, and often variegated. Veins are very conspicuous. Leaves on non-flowering stems are lobed, those on fertile flowering stems are unlobed.

Fruit: Small, black berries in winter.

Notes:

- Ivy is highly shade tolerant and forms a dense impenetrable ground cover.
- Climbs and smothers shrubs and trees.
- May occur in a variety of locations and is most seriously invasive in forests where it grows high into the canopy.
- Birds eat the berries and disperse the seeds.

Similar native species: Climbing Lignum *Muehlenbeckia australis*.

Status: Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

Weed treatment:



Herbs & Succulents

Weeds and fire

Weeds, particularly those with woody stems and branches, can significantly increase bushfire risk by adding to fuel loads around your home and contributing to a fire's intensity.

Some possess certain characteristics (e.g. leaf oils, fine foliage, dense growth) that add to their flammability while others, particularly vines and creepers, can also act as 'ladder fuels', carrying fire from the ground up into the canopy or on to a structure.

Most weeds produce huge numbers of seeds throughout their lifetimes, many of which have growth cycles that are stimulated by fire. This can result in a massive weed response in the aftermath of a bushfire.

Weeds that increase fuel loads or contribute to a fire's intensity are identified in this brochure by a fire icon.



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