

# *Weeds of the Surf Coast Shire*



Printed copies of this booklet have been produced in limited numbers.

The information can be accessed at  
[www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au)  
and will be updated as required.

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## **Acknowledgements**

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Gillian Brew for graphic design.

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The Surf Coast Shire's natural environment contains a rich diversity of indigenous plants, which provide habitat for many species of native animals. Protecting this environment is critical to maintaining the natural values enjoyed by many Surf Coast residents – human and animal alike – and visitors.

Weeds are a threat to our native vegetation. Guarding against this threat requires Council, State and Federal Government, local landholders and community volunteers to invest significant time, effort and resources in controlling and eradicating weeds.

As a Surf Coast resident, you also have a key role to play, starting with the plants you choose for your garden and working to remove – or at least manage – any weeds that have taken root there. This booklet aims to help you fulfil this role by describing the weeds commonly found on the Surf Coast and identifying appropriate treatment methods for each.

For more information about each treatment method, refer to the information sheet *Treating Weeds in Your Surf Coast Garden: Your guide to chemical and non-chemical methods*, which is a companion publication to this booklet. Information sheets identifying the top 20 weeds for key Surf Coast townships are also available. Go to [www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au) to access these publications.

## The weed threat and you

Each of the weeds described in this booklet represents either an existing or potential threat to the Surf Coast's environmental values. Some may surprise you. You may question their status as weeds. It is however important to note that many plant species outside their natural ecological habitats can easily become environmental weeds.

Agapanthus, Arum Lily, Gazania and Freesia, for example, are all popular garden plants in urban environments. On the Surf Coast however, their capacity to 'jump the garden fence' and make a home in more natural environments – to the detriment of our native flora and fauna – makes them all weeds.

Weeds such as Sallow Wattle and Coast Tea-tree are highly flammable, which substantially increases fuel loads around homes and surrounding areas, adding to the bushfire risk.

Birds are attracted to fruit-bearing weeds, such as Sweet Pittosporum and Bluebell Creeper, and spread the seeds in reserves and bushland. The seeds quickly grow into plants that out-compete local plant species, which can alter landscape character by causing the extinction of indigenous plants and reducing wildlife habitat.

Weeds even threaten agricultural areas with highly invasive grasses, like Serrated Tussock and Chilean Needle-grass, forming dense stands that can reduce a farmer's livestock carrying capacity and increase the risk of serious physical injury to stock.

These are just some of the reasons why we all need to do our bit to reduce the weed threat by preventing weeds in the first place or taking steps to treat them. Here's a few suggestions to help you get started.

## Prevention is better than treatment

- Choose your garden plants wisely, particularly if you live within 500 metres of a natural area.
- Where possible, select plants indigenous to the local area.
- Consider each plant's weed potential – do some research, ask questions, refer to this guide.
- Be alert to the impacts your plant choices may have on the surrounding area – and beyond – and on the native birds and animals that reside there.
- Familiarise yourself with your fire risk – will your chosen plants increase the fuel load around your home and add to a bushfire's intensity? (Refer to *Landscaping your Surf Coast Garden for Bushfire*, which is available at [www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au)).
- Understand the importance of local indigenous vegetation in terms of its habitat potential, botanical heritage and pollination, and its contribution to neighbourhood character and overall biodiversity (e.g. clean air and water).

## If treatment is your only option

- Remove identified weed species from your garden and replace with local indigenous plants. (*Helpful hint: Dianella is an ideal replacement for Agapanthus – it has similar features and is a lovely local plant*).
- Deposit your garden waste in your green-lidded Council bin or at your local landfill. Many weeds are spread by people dumping plant material over the fence, in reserves and on roadsides, which is illegal and carries hefty fines.
- Enter and leave natural areas with caution. Shoes and clothes can carry weed seeds and other nasties (e.g. pathogens like Phytophthora) so enter clean and exit clean.
- Join a local conservation group and volunteer some of your time and effort to protecting the natural areas that you know and love.

## Types of weeds

Weeds generally fall into one or more of the following three broad categories – and their associated sub-categories – as indicated by the Status of each weed described in this booklet.

**Weeds of National Significance** refers to the weed species currently identified by the Australian Government due to their invasive nature, potential to spread and environmental, social and economic impacts. On the Surf Coast, such weeds include African Boxthorn, Asparagus Fern, Blackberry, Boneseed, Bridal Creeper, Broom species, Chilean Needle-grass, Gorse, Serrated Tussock and Willows.

Individual landowners and land managers are responsible for managing Weeds of National Significance. For more information, go to [www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/weeds/lisys/wons.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/weeds/lisys/wons.html)

**Declared Noxious Weeds** refers to plants listed in Victoria under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 as causing environmental or economic harm, or presenting risks to human health. Such plants fall into four weed categories:

1. **State Prohibited**
2. **Regionally Prohibited**
3. **Regionally Controlled, or**
4. **Restricted Weed.**

Many Surf Coast weeds are Regionally Controlled (i.e. they are generally widespread and considered to have regional impacts). Paterson's Curse, Ragwort, Sweet Briar and Wild Watsonia are among those that fall into this category. Landowners are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to prevent the growth and spread of Regionally Controlled weeds on their land.

For more information about Declared Noxious Weeds in the region, go to [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/weeds/invasive-plants](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/weeds/invasive-plants)

Environmental weeds refers to plants that spread along roadsides and into natural areas, often because they have 'jumped the fence' from household gardens. They can be introduced plants from overseas (e.g. Agapanthus, which originates from South Africa) or Australian natives that are not indigenous to the local area (e.g. Cootamundra Wattle from New South Wales).

These weeds can devastate natural areas by out-competing local plants and reducing wildlife habitat. Some may hybridise (i.e. crossbreed) with local indigenous plants, corrupting their genetic identity. Sallow Wattle, for example, has hybridised with indigenous species Coast Wattle.

## 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.



Many of the weeds listed in this guide, particularly some Australian natives, have certain characteristics (e.g. volatile leaf oils, fine foliage, dense growth) that are known to influence flammability. Vines and creepers 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.

Throughout this guide, weeds that increase fuel loads or contribute to a fire's intensity are designated by a fire icon.

## Weed treatment in a nutshell

Weed treatment is the use of chemical (e.g. herbicide) and/or non-chemical (e.g. manual removal, use of organic materials) methods to discourage the growth of unwanted and/or invasive plants. The choice of method depends on plant type and size, and your preference as a gardener.

The most effective treatment targets specific plant types and life cycles as different weeds respond better to some treatment methods than others. (Refer to the Plant glossary section for more information about plant types and life cycles). Whilst chemical control is effective for most situations, the use of alternative, non-chemical and organic methods is becoming increasingly popular and has been shown to be equally effective in many instances.

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

## Chemical treatment methods



### Foliar Spray

Foliar spray involves applying herbicide to the leaves of plants. This method is appropriate for all plant types except tall woody weeds, weeds with large amounts of foliage or larger infestations. Plant type will determine the herbicide used and timing of control. Note that some herbicides are specific to plant groups, others are generic. Some plants (e.g. Ivy) require a penetrant to be added to the chemical so the herbicide can absorb into the foliage. Spray when the plant is actively growing (some plants are dormant during winter). Be cautious of spraying if the plant is producing fruit.



### Cut and Paint

Cut and paint is the rapid application of herbicide to the cut surface of a plant's trunk.

This method is appropriate for smaller woody weeds which are actively growing (e.g. Blackberry, Sweet Briar). Cut plant as close to ground as possible and apply systemic herbicide (e.g. undiluted glyphosate) within 10-30 seconds.



### Scrape and Paint

Scrape and paint is a variation on the cut and paint technique. Bark is scraped with a knife within 1m of the base of the vine and painted with systemic herbicide. Multiple scrapes can be applied to larger vines. This method is appropriate for woody vines and creepers.



### Frilling

Frilling is a similar technique to ringbarking except 'frills' are made with an axe to the trunk of a woody weed. Herbicide is applied immediately to the frill. Appropriate for large woody weeds.



### Organically Derived (Non-Synthetic) Herbicides

Organic herbicides are becoming more widely available. Organic herbicides are made from plant-based essential oils and work by stripping the outer coating of contacted plant and seed material, causing cell collapse and desiccation.



### Fertiliser

Application of fertiliser can alter soil nutrients, providing favourable or unfavourable conditions for plant growth. Local knowledge and research will be required for this method.

## Non-chemical treatment methods

**Hand Removal/Pulling**

Removing the plant via hand or mechanical means. Appropriate for all plant types. All parts capable of re-growth should be removed and disposed of carefully. For plants with rhizomes (underground stem), cut into the soil around the plant and remove as any small pieces left behind will re-grow.

**Cut Trunk and Stems**

Cut trunk and stems involves removing the plant by sawing its trunk and branches, leaving stump in ground. Stump can be left or grubbed. Some stumps may re-sprout. Appropriate for small shrubs to larger trees.

**Grubbing**

Grubbing is the use of a mattock or similar tool to remove the plant and its roots. Appropriate for plants with developed root systems that are difficult to remove by hand pulling.

**Mulch/Smother**

Mulching is the smothering of plants or plant materials to prevent or discourage re-growth. Mulch can be organic (e.g. weed-free chip mulch, fibre matting, newspaper, coir, jute, wool, paper, cardboard) and the like. Mulching with compost or mulch material is effective for some grasses, provided a thick layer of newspaper or cardboard is laid first.

**Ringbark**

Ringbarking involves chipping a ring of 2-5cm wide around the trunk. The internal water and nutrient system is destroyed, killing the plant. This method is appropriate for many woody plants.

**Slashing**

Mowing or slashing weeds prior to flowering/seeding using a whipper snipper, lawnmower or tractor. Repeated slashing of above ground foliage of bulb-like perennial weeds eventually exhausts underground food reserves. This method can take several years to be effective, so a combination of slashing with other methods may be warranted. Some plants such as Cape Weed have adaptive flowering mechanisms and can re-sprout very close to the ground after slashing.

**Steam/Flame Weeding**

Steam or flame weeding is the application of steam or flame onto the plant. Appropriate for broad-leaf weeds.

**Solarisation**

Solarisation is the use of the sun to destroy plants. Plastic bags or sheets are used to generate heat and kill most plants and weeds.

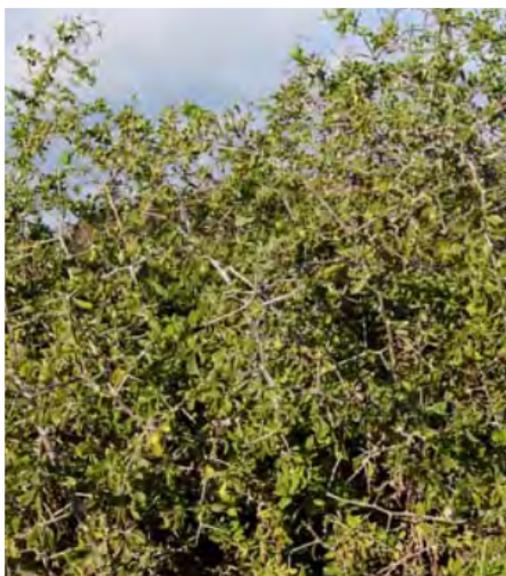
Plant types identified in this guide include:

- Trees and shrubs – having woody stems and branches.
- Herbs and succulents – non-woody plants with soft broad leaves, including plants with bulbs, tubers or rhizomes (i.e. plants with underground parts from which re-growth can occur).
- Climbers and creepers – weak-stemmed plants that rely on other plants and structures (e.g. walls) for support.
- Grasses and rushes – non-woody plants.

The different plant life cycles are:

- Ephemerals – plants with short life cycles, typically between three weeks and several months.
- Annuals – plants lasting one year.
- Biennial – plants lasting two years.
- Perennials – may live for several years and grow from seed or underground parts, or both.

For further information on these and other methods of weed control please go to [http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/My\\_Environment/Environment\\_Publications](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/My_Environment/Environment_Publications)



## African Boxthorn

*Lycium ferocissimum* SOLANACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A large multi-branched shrub to 4m high with brown to grey stems with fleshy leaves and spines.

**Flowers:** White or pale lilac flowers, often with darker purple blotches in the centre, appearing mainly in spring and summer.

**Leaves:** Oval-shaped, smooth, fleshy, short-stalked leaves forming in clusters along the branches.

**Fruit:** Green berries turn orange-red, mainly in the summer.

### Notes:

- Boxthorn is an aggressive plant, its spines making it a formidable barrier to people.
- Thickets often provide good habitat for both pest and indigenous animals. Commonly harbours rabbits.
- Grows densely, eliminating the growth of indigenous vegetation.
- The fruit is commonly eaten and spread by birds and also by foxes.

**Similar native species:** Sweet Bursaria *Bursaria spinosa*.

**Status:** Weed of National Significance, Regionally Controlled Weed.

**Weedy facts:** Was used widely as a hedge plant in Australia.

**Weed treatment:**





## Blackberry

*Rubus fruticosus* spp. *aggregata* ROSACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

A sprawling shrub or climbing plant growing in thickets from 2 to 3m high with stems arching and entangling, and covered in large, sharp prickles.

**Flowers:** White or pink flowers, 20-30mm in diameter, appear in late spring or summer.

**Leaves:** The large dark green leaves are alternate and divided into 3 or 5 leaflets, often with whitish hairs on the light green underside. There are short prickles on the leaf stalks and the underside of veins.

**Fruit:** Globe-shaped, 10-30mm diameter. Ripening in summer to autumn.

### Notes:

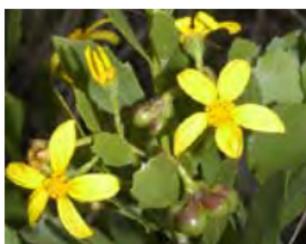
- Blackberries are highly invasive plants, reproducing by seed and root suckers, and from trailing stems that take root and make new plants.
- Forms dense, impenetrable thickets that exclude light from the soil surface, suppressing growth of indigenous species.
- Fruit is attractive to birds and foxes which play a major role in dispersion.

**Similar native species:** Small-leaf Bramble *Rubus parvifolius*.

**Status:** Weed of National Significance, Regionally Controlled Weed.

### Weed treatment:





## Boneseed

*Chrysanthemoides monilifera* ssp. *monilifera*

ASTERACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A multi-branched shrub up to 3m 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:





## Bushy Yate

*Eucalyptus lehmannii* MYRTACEAE

Origin: Native to south coast of Western Australia



### Description:

An evergreen densely rounded tree to 8m with spread of 3m.

**Flowers:** Flower buds are orange while the flowers open greenish-yellow autumn through winter.

**Leaves:** Deep green, elliptical to 70mm long.

**Fruit:** Horned capsules fused at the base in clusters of five to eight.

### Notes:

- Endemic to the south coast of Western Australia.
- First described in 1813.
- The buds of this eucalypt appear as a cluster of narrow, horn-shaped fingers.

**Status:** Environmental Weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Also known as Lehmann's Gum as this species was named in honour of Johann Georg Christian Lehmann (1792–1860), professor of botany in Hamburg, Germany.

### 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.

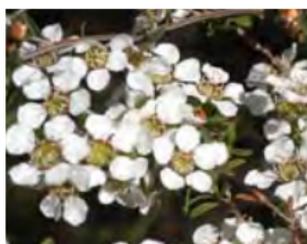
**Similar native species:** Black Wattle *Acacia mearnsii* and Silver Wattle *Acacia dealbata* may be mistaken for Cape Wattle when not in flower. No indigenous wattle has bottlebrush-like flowers.

**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:





## Cootamundra Wattle

*Acacia baileyana* MIMOSACEAE

Origin: Native to Cootamundra NSW



### Description:

A spreading evergreen tree or large, bushy shrub to 6m high.

**Flowers:** Bright yellow, fragrant fluffy round flower heads are borne in flower spikes from leaf axils in winter to early spring.

**Leaves:** Silvery-blue with a feathery appearance - each leaf has up to 24 pairs of tiny leaflets.

**Fruit:** Pods up to 100mm long mature to reddish-brown. They are flattened, straight or slightly curved, and contain up to 12 seeds.

### Notes:

- One of the most commonly planted Acacia species.
- Escapes easily from cultivation into woodlands and forests.
- A nitrogen fixer that can change the soil nutrient status of invaded areas.
- Reproduces by seed that is spread by birds, ants, machinery and garden refuse.

**Similar native species:** Indigenous wattle species with feathery-like foliage - especially Silver Wattle *Acacia dealbata*.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Cootamundra Wattle has been featured on an Australian stamp and in a song by the Australian Country music singer-songwriter, John Williamson.

### Weed treatment:





## Cotoneaster

*Cotoneaster glaucophyllus* ROSACEAE

Origin: China

### Description:

An evergreen shrub or small tree usually with many stems, to about 3m tall.

**Flowers:** Small, white flowers appear in tight clusters of 20-50 in late spring-early summer.

**Leaves:** Oval leaves to 70mm tapering to an end point, are dark green on upper surface, light green to grey on underside.

**Fruit:** Clusters of bright red berries mature in early autumn.

### Notes:

- Can be invasive in a range of natural habitats, including woodlands, forests and riparian environments.
- Seedlings are often found under trees where birds often perch.
- Seeds are spread by birds, foxes and in garden waste.

**Similar native species:** Could be confused, before berries appear, with Dusty Miller *Spyridium parvifolium* and Rusty Pomaderris *Pomaderris ferruginea*.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** At least nine species of Cotoneaster have naturalised in Australia.

### Weed treatment:





## English Broom

*Cytisus scoparius* FABACEAE

Origin: Europe



### Description:

A woody shrub to 3m with upright or arching 5-angled stems. Sometimes loses its leaves in winter or dry conditions.

**Flowers:** Long, golden-yellow pea flowers, sometimes with reddish markings, appear in the leaf axils along the stems from spring to summer.

**Leaves:** Usually with 3 leaflets, surfaces hairy.

**Fruit:** A flattened pod, hairy along margins, to 60mm long, maturing to brown-black and containing up to 22 seeds.

### Notes:

- Highly invasive species.
- Can fix nitrogen, altering soil fertility and growth of indigenous species.
- Seed is spread by birds, ants, animals, vehicles, machinery and in garden refuse.

**Similar native species:** Golden Spray *Viminaria juncea*.

**Status:** Weed of National Significance.

**Weedy facts:** The seed pods of the English Broom explode, dispersing their seed up to 4m from the parent plant.

### 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:





## Golden Wreath Wattle

*Acacia saligna* FABACEAE

Origin: Western Australia



### Description:

Shrub or tree 2-6m high.

**Flowers:** Orange-yellow flower heads in spike-like clusters, spring flowering.

**Leaves:** Flattened stalks, often drooping, usually linear but can be variable in size and shape.

**Fruit:** Linear pods with thickened margins.

### Notes:

- Plants live for 10-20 years.
- 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.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Saligna refers to the willow-like weeping habit of the tree. Golden Wreath Wattle refers to the sprays of golden flowers.

### Weed treatment:





## Gorse

*Ulex europaeus* FABACEAE

Origin: Europe



### Description:

A large shrub to 3m, easily recognised by its flowers and its many-branched stems armed with numerous spines to 50mm long.

**Flowers:** Bright yellow, fragrant pea flowers appear in clusters in winter and early spring.

**Leaves:** True leaves on seedlings have 3 leaflets, replaced by scales on mature plants.

**Fruit:** Flowers are followed by dark brown, oblong, hairy seed pods, 10-20mm long. Pods explode to release seeds.

### Notes:

- Gorse forms dense thickets that harbour vermin and exclude growth of indigenous plants.
- Seeding is prolific and the seeds have a hard, water-resistant coating.
- Seeds remain dormant in the soil for up to 30 years.
- Seeds are dispersed by birds, animals, ants, water, vehicles, machinery, gravel, dumped garden waste and contaminated soil.

**Similar native species:** Prickly Acacia *Acacia paradoxa*.

**Status:** Weed of National Significance, Regionally Controlled Weed.

**Weedy facts:** Gorse is regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its potential for spread, and economic and environmental impacts. It is a major agricultural weed in Tasmania and parts of Victoria and is becoming an environmental threat in national parks and other bushland areas.

### Weed treatment:





## Hawthorn

*Crataegus monogyna* ROSACEAE

Origin: Europe



### Description:

A deciduous, erect, thorny large shrub or tree to 6m.

**Flowers:** White, cream or pink scented flowers appear in clusters along and on the end of branches in spring.

**Leaves:** Broadly oval but are lobed and have toothed margins.

**Fruit:** Fleshy, bright to dark red apple-shaped berries to 10mm in diameter which ripen in summer.

### Notes:

- Hawthorn has become invasive along roadsides, in agricultural land, forests, woodlands and riparian areas.
- Large plants produce thousands of fruits each autumn that are dispersed by birds, possums, foxes, machinery, vehicles and dumped garden waste.
- Commonly provides food for smaller native animals, so care should be taken to establish suitable habitat nearby, and remove bushes gradually.

**Status:** Regionally Controlled Weed.

**Weedy facts:** Hawthorn is a slow-growing species that may live for over 100 years.

### 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 – Green

*Melaleuca diosmifolia* MYRTACEAE

Origin: Native to Western Australia



### Description:

A dense upright shrub with many branches growing up to 3m high.

**Flowers:** Bottlebrush-like flower heads – greenish-yellow spikes to 80mm long appear along the branches in summer and spring.

**Leaves:** Crowded, spirally-arranged, oblong-elliptic leaves 10-20mm long. Leafy stems grow past the flower heads.

**Fruit:** Tightly-packed, cylindrically-arranged, woody seed capsules that are persistent on the plant.

### Notes:

- An exceptionally serious environmental weed – fast growing and spreads very easily.
- Often forms dense thickets.
- Seed is dispersed by wind and water.

**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:





## Italian Buckthorn

*Rhamnus alaternus* RHAMNACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

A large evergreen shrub or small tree to 3m tall, densely-branched with angular stems.

**Flowers:** Small, yellow-green, fragrant star-shaped flowers appear in clusters from late winter to early spring.

**Leaves:** Dark green foliage, glossy on top and paler underneath. Leaves are alternate. Leaf margins are often shallowly toothed, and the leaf has a pointed tip. Veins are prominent.

**Fruit:** Fruiting is prolific and small red berries, to 5mm long, appear in summer and turn black.

### Notes:

- A very serious environmental weed.
- Will survive drought conditions.
- Crowds out indigenous species where its dense growth prevents light reaching the ground-cover plants.
- Plants re-shoot vigorously from the base whenever top growth is damaged or removed.
- Seed is dispersed by birds, especially blackbirds, and also by dumping of garden waste.

**Similar native species:** Sea Box *Alyxia buxifolia*. The leaves of this species are opposite or in threes.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** This plant thrives near the coast and has formed medium to large populations in bushland reserves.

### Weed treatment:





## Kohuhu

*Pittosporum tenuifolium* PITTOSPORACEAE

Origin: New Zealand



### Description:

Densely foliated, evergreen tree or shrub to 8m high.

**Flowers:** Perfumed reddish-purple 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:** Kohuhu has small grey-black capsules.

### Notes:

- The cultivar “James Stirling” is commonly used as a fast growing hedge but has leaves much smaller than typical.
- Spreads quickly to bushland reserves, forming a dense canopy and excluding light to understorey 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.

### 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.

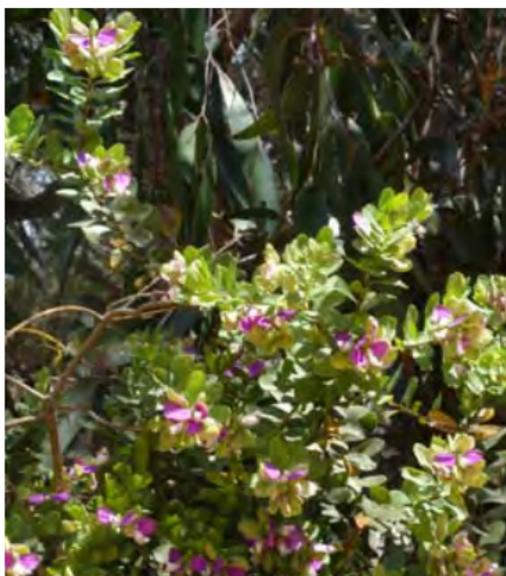
### Notes:

- 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:





## Peppercorn Tree

*Schinus molle* ANACARDIACEAE

Origin: South America

### Description:

Broad-crowned evergreen tree to about 12m high with hanging branchlets.

**Flowers:** Small, greenish-white, male and female flowers on separate plants in hanging clusters throughout the year.

**Leaves:** Fern-like leaves are divided into 15-41 alternately-arranged, shiny, narrow leaflets that are sticky and aromatic when crushed.

**Fruit:** Shiny round pink fruit to 7mm in diameter with a crusty skin developing on the female plants.

### Notes:

- Peppercorn trees have been planted along roadsides where they have spread into disturbed or degraded areas.
- Capable of invading grasslands, woodlands, dry forests and agricultural land.
- Mature trees cover large areas of ground with seed often covering the ground beneath them.
- Seed is dispersed by birds, animals and water.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Mature trees are resistant to drought and are able to sprout from the rootstock if damaged

### Weed treatment:





## Pincushion Hakea

*Hakea laurina* PROTEACEAE

Origin: Western Australia



### Description:

Forms dense large shrubs to 4m high.

**Flowers:** Red and creamish-pink round pincushion-like flowers in autumn and winter.

**Leaves:** Narrow elliptical leaves with prominent longitudinal veins.

**Fruit:** A rounded woody nut that remains on the plant, usually not releasing seed until the death of the branch.

### Notes:

- Pincushion Hakea is commonly planted as a hardy, salt-tolerant shrub in coastal areas.
- Several species of Hakea are indigenous: Bushy Needlewood *Hakea decurrens*, Western Furze Hakea *Hakea repullulans* and Furze Hakea *Hakea ulicina*.
- As with other Hakea species, Pincushion Hakea tends to grow very quickly and can rapidly invade, especially in coastal situations.
- Smothers indigenous vegetation and prevents regeneration.
- Seed is spread by wind and in dumped garden waste.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### 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 understorey 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:





## Radiata Pine

*Pinus radiata* PINACEAE

Origin: Europe



### Description:

Large, long-lived, cone-bearing, aromatic trees with thick furrowed bark, growing to 25-40m in height.

**Flowers:** Borne in late winter and spring, when male cones scatter pollen abundantly to fertilise the female cones. Large clouds of orange-yellow pollen are common.

**Leaves:** Slender needle-like leaves in groups of 3.

**Fruit:** Male and female cones on the same tree. Male cones are lateral and short-lived while female cones are terminal and persistent.

### Notes:

- Pines suppress and kill understorey plants and reduce the fertility of soils.
- The winged seeds are released from mature cones, often helped by cockatoos, and spread by the wind.
- Viable seeds may be held in cones for 5 years or longer.
- Mature pines seed into adjacent agricultural areas, roadsides and bushland.

**Similar native species:** She-oaks *Allocasuarina* sp.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Pines were planted near Anglesea for timber and many large trees still remain the area. *Pinus radiata* and Maritime Pine *Pinus pinaster* are the most common, but other species also exist.

### Weed treatment:





## 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:





## 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 Briar

*Rosa rubiginosa* ROSACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

A spiny perennial shrub to 3m high arising from shallow rootstock. Has multiple stems with backward facing spines along their length.

**Flowers:** Vary from white to pink with five petals. Flowers measure to 40mm. Appear in late spring to summer.

**Leaves:** Consist of pairs of shortly-stalked, oval leaflets along the leaf stalk with a single terminal leaflet. The leaflets contain glandular hairs on the underside and finely-serrated margins that secrete an apple-like fragrance.

**Fruit:** Smooth reddish-orange elliptical capsules or hips in which the seed is contained mature in late summer and are shed in autumn. Seeds are numerous.

### Notes:

- Sweet Briar has the potential to invade native bushland.
- Dense infestations provide food and harbour for pest animals, such as rabbits and foxes.
- Seeds are spread by fruit-eating animals and birds, and also by water. Regenerates by re-suckering from roots.

**Status:** Regionally Controlled Weed.

### 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:





## Tree Lucerne (Tagasaste)

*Chamaecytisus palmensis* FABACEAE

Origin: Canary Islands

### Description:

A large, dense, weeping shrub or small tree to 4m high.

**Flowers:** Cream to white pea flowers occur in winter and spring in clusters at the end of the short branches.

**Leaves:** Short-stalked leaves are formed of three leaflets.

**Fruit:** Downy pods grow to about 50mm long and contain approximately 10 seeds.

### Notes:

- Often planted as a quick-growing hedge and for animal fodder.
- Seeds are spread by birds, ants, graders, earth moving equipment and dumped garden waste.
- Encroaches onto roadsides and into bushland reserves.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Willows

*Salix sp.* SALICACEAE

Origin: Northern Hemisphere

### Description:

Deciduous trees, usually growing along waterways, varying in height from 5-30m with either single or multiple trunks.

There are many different species.

**Flowers:** Catkins, often fragrant, flowering in late winter and spring. Male and female flowers on separate trees.

**Leaves:** Variable in colour and shape, deciduous.

**Fruit:** Seed is viable for only a few days - falls in late spring.

### Notes:

- Increases erosion and flooding and damage to nearby infrastructure.
- Reduces quality and flow of water.
- Reduces habitat available for fish, birds, insects and spiders.
- Most willows are easily spread by stems and twigs breaking off and taking root.
- Some varieties of willow can also spread by seed that can be carried up to 100km by wind or water.

**Status:** Weed of National Significance.

**Weedy facts:** Although a familiar icon of the Australian landscape, Willows *Salix sp.* are now among the most serious riverbank and wetland weeds in temperate Australia.

### Weed treatment:





## African Weed-Orchid

*Disa bracteata* ORCHIDACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A robust, erect, fleshy perennial herb to 400mm high with annual tubers. The above-ground parts die back in summer and re-emerge in early spring.

**Flowers:** Up to 60 crowded tiny brown, green and yellow flowers appear in late spring and summer

**Leaves:** Initially form a clump at the base. Grass-like leaves with purplish under-surfaces develop along the lower stem, and tapering modified leaves surround the flowers.

**Fruit:** Each plant can produce vast numbers of microscopic seed.

### Notes:

- Seeds are readily dispersed over many kilometres by wind and water, and remain viable in the soil for many years.
- Seeds cling to clothing and animal fur.
- The plant has the ability to self-pollinate.
- Suited to a wide range of habitats, from paddocks to bushland, grassland and native heathland - often associated with disturbed situations.
- Tolerates shaded habitats and also grows well in full sun.

**Similar native species:** Several native orchid species are similar when in bud, including Onion Orchids *Microtis* sp. and Leek Orchids *Prasophyllum* sp. However none of the local orchids have numerous leaves with purplish under-surfaces.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weed treatment:** Contact the Surf Coast Shire for further advice on removal.



## 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:





## Aloe

*Aloe maculata* ALOEACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

An erect perennial succulent to 1.2m when in flower, forming dense clumps.

**Flowers:** Orange to pink, in clusters at the tops of long-branched stems. Flowers late winter to summer.

**Leaves:** Succulent bluish-green, lance-shaped leaves are crowded in a rosette at the base and have light spots in bands on their surfaces. Margins are sharply toothed.

**Fruit:** An oblong reddish-brown capsule to 35mm long.

### Notes:

- Propagates vigorously from broken pieces and underground runners.
- Has the potential to invade native bushland, farmland and waterways.
- Can cover extensive areas of land forming large clumps of vegetation which, because of their dense nature, smother the small ground-covering indigenous species.
- Mainly spread by road maintenance machinery and in dumped garden refuse.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Other species of Aloe and some other succulents are escaping from cultivation and becoming pests in the environment.

### Weed treatment:





## Angled Onion

*Allium triquetrum* LILIACEAE

Origin: Western Mediterranean region

### Description:

A bulbous summer-dormant perennial herb 300 to 500mm high. Has a characteristic garlic odour.

**Flowers:** White tubular drooping flowers with green stripes grow in clusters and appear on triangular flower stalks from winter to spring.

**Leaves:** Flat green succulent leaves grow from base of plant - straplike and becoming weeping.

**Fruit:** Ovoid capsules, about 6-7mm long, bear small black seeds.

### Notes:

- An aggressive plant that has the potential to rapidly occupy large tracts of land, especially if disturbed or degraded.
- Often grows on drainage lines and other moist sites.
- Dispersal is by seed, and by bulbs being transported by water along drainage lines.
- Also spread by road maintenance machinery and the movement of contaminated soil.

**Status:** Restricted Weed.

### Weed treatment:





## Arum Lily

*Zantedeschia aethiopica* ARACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

Perennial herb with large, starchy, tuber-like underground rhizome.

**Flowers:** The small, yellow male and female flowers arranged in the central column are surrounded by a large white spathe on an erect stem to 1m. Flowers mostly in spring and early summer, but often at other times.

**Leaves:** Large, leathery, dark green and arrow-head shaped. Clumps of juvenile leaves are often seen emerging from the underground rhizomes.

**Fruit:** Green or yellow berries that turn orange when ripe.

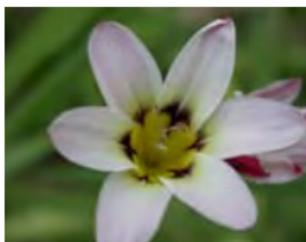
### Notes:

- **Considered extremely poisonous to all animals, and is also toxic and can cause irritations to humans.**
- Highly invasive in moist areas - along streams, drainage lines and in swamps or in inter-dune corridors.
- Dispersed by birds or water and by fragmentation of rhizome.
- Often spread by movement of contaminated soil and through dumping of garden waste.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Bulbil Sparaxis

*Sparaxis bulbifera* IRIDACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A perennial herb to 350mm high that dies back each year to an underground corm.

**Flowers:** Masses of creamish-white flowers, the outside tinged with purple, are produced in the spring. The flowers are on wiry stems and can have numerous colour variations.

**Leaves:** Clumps of bright green leaves, very narrow or sword-shaped, appear from the underground corms in winter.

**Fruit:** Thin-walled capsule with numerous seeds.

### Notes:

- Also known as the Harlequin Flower
- Capable of spreading along roadsides and into reserves where they form a widespread ground cover.
- Smothers indigenous species.
- Numerous bulbils are produced in the leaf axils which are spread by wind and water.
- Many populations have originated from garden rubbish dumping.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Cape Tulip (One-Leaf)

*Moraea flaccida* IRIDACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A perennial herb to 700mm high with stiff, erect stems that zigzag as they branch. Grows from underground corms, and produces new corms each year.

**Flowers:** Salmon-pink to orange flowers with yellow centres are at the tips of the flowering stems. Flowers in spring.

**Leaves:** Folded, ribbed, linear, to 1m long extended and drooping above the flowers.

**Fruit:** Narrow, cylindrical capsule to 50mm long, splitting into three parts to release numerous seeds.

### Notes:

- All parts of Cape Tulip are toxic to humans as well as animals including cattle, sheep and goats.
- Cape Tulips are primarily associated with agricultural lands, but are also invasive on roadsides, native grasslands, woodlands and heathlands. Numbers can expand rapidly following disturbance.
- Severely impedes the growth and regeneration of indigenous ground flora.
- Seeds germinate in autumn and plants regrow from corms at the same time.
- Plants are spread by seed and movement of corms.

**Status:** Regionally Controlled Weed.

### Weed treatment:





## Cape Weed

*Arctotheca calendula* ASTERACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A prostrate, spreading annual to 300mm high.

**Flowers:** The large, yellow, daisy-like flowers with dark centres appear from spring to summer.

**Leaves:** A rosette of heavily-lobed leaves, the underside covered with woolly down.

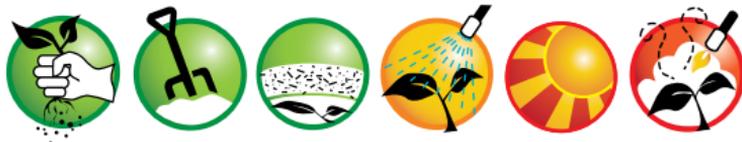
**Fruit:** The mature seed is coated with a pink woolly covering.

### Notes:

- Cape Weed is becoming more prevalent and is often seen along roadsides, edges of tracks and in reserves.
- Forms extensive clumps of vegetation smothering the small ground-covering indigenous species.
- Seed is spread by birds, animals, wind, vehicles, machinery and in dumped garden waste.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Cretan Trefoil

*Lotus creticus* FABACEAE

Origin: Mediterranean coast and Portugal.

### Description:

A perennial greyish and densely hairy herb to 400mm high.

**Flowers:** Bright golden yellow pea flowers appear mainly in summer and autumn in groups of two to six.

**Leaves:** Masses of silvery, silky, hairy leaves with five leaflets - the upper three are oblong to broadly lance-shaped, the lower two are oval.

**Fruit:** Almost hairless cylindrical pods to 40mm long, bearing 9-15 seeds. The pods are grouped together making a shape reminiscent of the diverging toes of a small bird, leading to another common name of 'bird's-foot'.

### Notes:

- Cretan Trefoil is a prolific seeder and is establishing itself on the coastal dunes where it has spread at a very fast rate.
- Ripe seed pods explode scattering the seed.
- Completely smothers the low indigenous vegetation.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Fennel

*Foeniculum vulgare* APIACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

An erect, robust and many-stemmed perennial herb growing 2-3m high and forming large clumps of vegetation.

**Flowers:** Numerous, tiny yellow-green flowers appear in flat-topped umbrella-like clusters in late spring and early summer.

**Leaves:** To about 500mm long, light to mid-green. Finely divided into many feathery, thread-like segments.

**Fruit:** Almost hairless cylindrical pods bearing 9-15 seeds.

### Notes:

- Often seen along roadsides, railway tracks, waterways and drains but also invading bushland, pasture and disturbed sites.
- Smells strongly of aniseed when the foliage is handled.
- Infestations eliminate most other ground-flora and severely impede overstorey regeneration.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Freesia

*Freesia alba* x *F. leichtlinii* IRIDACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

Corm-bearing perennial herbs that die back in summer and produce new foliage in winter.

**Flowers:** Highly fragrant trumpet-shaped flowers are white to cream with yellow markings, shaded purple on outer surface. Flower stalks grow to about 300mm high. A wide range of colours is available in garden varieties. Flowers appear in spring.

**Leaves:** Flat, soft, straight and mostly at the base. They are arranged in a roughly fan shape.

**Fruit:** A wrinkled green capsule with numerous seeds.

### Notes:

- A common garden escapee along roadsides and in areas of native vegetation.
- Plants can spread rapidly by producing abundant corms or by seed.

**Status:** Regionally Controlled Weed.

### Weed treatment:





## Galenia

*Galenia pubescens* AIZOACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A perennial greyish mat-forming plant, up to 300 mm high and spreading 1.6m or more across, with thick, woody stems.

**Flowers:** Small white or pink inconspicuous fragrant flowers appear from spring to summer. They are hairy on the outside.

**Leaves:** Semi-succulent, oval to spoon-shaped, hairy and flat with a slightly re-curved tip.

**Fruit:** Pentagonal cup-shaped capsules contain shiny black seeds to 1mm in length.

### Notes:

- Galenia or Blanket Leaf is often found on disturbed sites, wasteland and roadsides.
- Forms dense mats of foliage and stems displacing native grasses and other understorey species.
- Disrupts light and prevents moisture getting to other species, and forms a monoculture.

**Similar native species:** Nodding Saltbush *Einadia nutans*.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Said to threaten the honey industry as bees utilise it but the honey becomes tainted.

### Weed treatment:





## Gazania

*Gazania linearis* ASTERACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A perennial low-growing, clump-forming trailing herb growing from rhizomes.

**Flowers:** Large daisy-type flowers of varying shades of orange and yellow, often with shades of brown, appear over long periods of the year. Other forms in varying colours are also available.

**Leaves:** Clumps of greenish-grey, lance-shaped leaves, white hairs below.

**Fruit:** A tiny 'seed' (achene) covered in very long hairs several times the length of the fruit body. Achenes are produced in abundance and blown by the wind, thus allowing the plant to spread rapidly.

### Notes:

- Tends to smother all indigenous vegetation as it grows in clump size.
- Has spread along roadsides, into reserves and on to the coastal dunes.
- Also spreads by seed and by pieces of root often as a result of road maintenance machinery or dumped garden waste.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Gladiolus-Sweet and Gladiolus-Wild

*Gladiolus tristis* and *Gladiolus undulatus* IRIDACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

Corm-bearing perennial herbs to about 800mm tall that die back in summer and produce new foliage in winter.

**Flowers:** Funnel-shaped. Wild Gladiolus bears 3-4 white to cream flowers to 130mm long with a blue-green tinge and with wavy margins in late spring and summer.

Sweet Gladiolus bears 2-7 cream to dull-yellow fragrant flowers to 90mm long in spring, with a dark line and veining on the petals and sepals, and is strongly aromatic at night.

**Leaves:** Wild Gladiolus has 3-6 leaves that arise from the base on each plant and are slightly longer than the flowering stalk. They are flat and straight to 20mm wide with a sharp tip. Sweet Gladiolus has one narrow flat straight leaf that arises from the base.

**Fruit:** Not known to develop seed in Australia.

### Notes:

- Both species are troublesome in winter-wet areas, drainage channels and along roadsides.
- Plants can spread rapidly by producing abundant underground corms.
- Spread by water, in contaminated soil, in mud on machinery and vehicles, and in dumped garden waste.
- Both species displace indigenous vegetation as they form extensive dense clumps of ground cover.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Horehound

*Marrubium vulgare* LAMIACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

Bushy aromatic perennial herb to about 600mm tall with over 100 individual stems.

**Flowers:** White, two-lipped flowers are borne in dense whorl-like clusters on the stems at the leaf-nodes. Flowers usually from summer through to autumn.

**Leaves:** Paired along the stems at the base of the flower clusters. They are very hairy and deeply wrinkled on the upper surface.

**Fruit:** Calyx develops into a burr with hooked, curved spines and contains 4 brown or black seeds.

### Notes:

- Horehound is a widespread and troublesome weed, especially in degraded and disturbed areas.
- Particularly invasive in pastures and roadsides, and is also invading bushland.
- Burrs and seeds are spread by adhering to animals and humans, water and vehicle tyres.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Large-flowered Wood Sorrel

*Oxalis purpurea* OXALIDACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A perennial herb with bulbs.

**Flowers:** Solitary pink flowers appear on short stalks from autumn to spring.

**Leaves:** Broadly oval to rounded leaflets.

### Notes:

- Also known as 'Four o'clock'
- Serious weed in bushland, roadsides and troublesome in gardens
- Spreads from bulbs dispersed by water, animals, in soil, and garden waste.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Montbretia

*Crocosmia x crocosmiflora* IRIDACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A corm-bearing perennial herb with annual leaves and flowers.

**Flowers:** Up to 20 yellow to orange trumpet-shaped flowers per stem with zigzag flower stalks to 900mm high.

**Leaves:** Soft, strap-like and mostly at the base with 6-12 leaves per plant, 300-800mm long and 10-20mm wide.

**Fruit:** A usually shrivelled brown capsule containing round, brown seeds.

### Notes:

- Forms widespread and dense clumps to the exclusion of indigenous plants.
- Spread as corms and rhizomes are moved to new areas by water or machinery.
- Many populations have originated from garden rubbish dumping.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Narrow-leaf Clover

*Trifolium angustifolium* FABACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

A hairy, low lying, annual clover with trifoliate leaves. Flowering stems to 350mm high.

**Flowers:** Pinkish in colour, appear in dense, hairy spike-like clusters up to 80mm long. Flowers in late winter and spring.

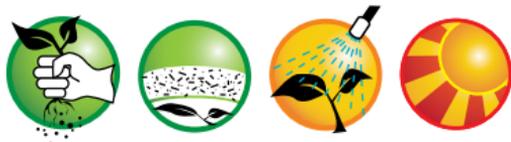
**Leaves:** Formed of three leaflets up to 70mm long. They are narrowly lance-shaped.

### Notes:

- Originally introduced as a pasture legume (i.e. contributes nitrogen), it has now become naturalised along roadsides and in coastal areas.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Paterson's Curse

*Echium plantagineum* BORAGINACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

An erect, many-branched, hairy annual herb usually to 1.2m high.

**Flowers:** Purple to bluish trumpet-shaped to 30mm long, with two of its five stamens much longer than the others. Flowers are crowded along one side of a curved flower spike.

**Leaves:** Initially has rosette leaves to 300mm long, hairy and broadly oval. Stem leaves are smaller and also hairy.

**Fruit:** Capsule is in segments of four, black to greyish-brown and wrinkled.

### Notes:

- A major agricultural weed, also occurring in various natural habitats including grasslands, woodlands, heathlands and along roadsides.
- Poisonous to grazing animals and horses in particular.
- Can form very extensive, persistent populations in disturbed areas. A single plant produces over 10,000 seeds.
- Seed is dispersed by animals, water, machinery, contaminated agricultural produce and by movement of soil.

**Similar native species:** Austral Bugle *Ajuga australis*.

**Status:** Regionally Controlled Weed.

**Weedy Facts:** Also known as 'Salvation Jane' in South Australia. It is considered a resource for bee-keepers.

### Weed treatment:





## Purple Groundsel

*Senecio elegans* ASTERACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

An erect annual herb growing from 200-600mm tall with thick hollow stems.

**Flowers:** Large bright flowers with about 13 rich purplish-pink ray florets and yellow centres appearing on single erect branching flower stalks in spring and summer.

**Leaves:** The leaves have blades up to about 80mm long that are deeply cut or divided into several toothed lobes. The foliage is somewhat hairy and glandular, sticky to the touch.

**Fruit:** Once pollinated the flower heads turn into fluffy white balls, ready for the wind to disperse the seeds.

### Notes:

- Rapidly spreads by seed, wind and contaminated sand from sand dunes.
- Well adapted to coastal conditions and thrives in disturbed, sandy, windy areas. Germinates freely in autumn with the start of the winter rains.
- The centres of the daisies are bright yellow, full with pollen and nectar that attracts bees and beetles.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire

### Weed treatment:





## Ragwort

*Senecio jacobaea* ASTERACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

An erect biennial or short-lived perennial herb up to 1m tall.

**Flowers:** Bright yellow flower-heads usually appear in large clusters at the end of branches in late spring and summer.

**Leaves:** The young plant develops as a rosette of leaves. Stem leaves are deeply cut and wrinkled, dark to mid-green on upper surface, lighter and slightly downy underneath.

**Fruit:** Pale brown with a tuft of slender white hairs.

### Notes:

- A pasture weed capable of invading roadsides, disturbed sites and bushland reserves.
- A prolific seeder – the seed can remain viable in the ground for many years.
- Seed is spread by wind and water, and also by animals and vehicles.
- Reproduces from crowns, roots and seeds.
- Is poisonous to most types of livestock.

**Similar native species:** Similar to many indigenous *Senecio* species, such as Fireweed *Senecio linearifolius*.

**Status:** Regionally Controlled Weed.

**Weedy facts:** One large plant can produce over 250,000 seeds per year.

### Weed treatment:





## Sea Spurge

*Euphorbia paralias* EUPHORBIACEAE

Origin: Mediterranean region

### Description:

A fleshy perennial herb, 600-900mm high, with a long tap root. Stems, 1-9 per plant, produce sticky white sap when broken. Flowering branches die off after flowering and generally remain on the plant for another season.

**Flowers:** Clusters of yellowish-green flowers are borne on long stems on forked branches at the top of the plant from spring to autumn.

**Leaves:** Oblong to oval, crowded and overlapping near the base, more rounded on the flowering branches.

**Fruit:** Seeds are borne in a capsule. Mass germination occurs in spring to summer.

### Notes:

- Difficult to remove because of the very long tap root.
- Seed is spread by wind and on ocean currents, and also by beach recreation equipment.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Sea Spurge has invaded most of our coastal dunes. It changes the dune shape from softly angled to a steeper form, more prone to being undercut by wave action.

### Weed treatment:





## Soursob

*Soursob Oxalis pes-caprae* OXALIDACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A perennial succulent herb to 300mm high with underground bulbs, and foliage that dies back each year in summer. Bright yellow flowers appear in winter to spring. Leaves with heart-shaped leaflets form a carpet of vegetation.

### Notes:

- A persistent weed in gardens, farmland, roadsides and bushland reserves.
- May be toxic to stock.
- Spreads from bulbs and bulbils.
- Difficult to control once established and requires repeated control actions.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Artichoke Thistle

*Cynara cardunculus* ASTERACEAE

Origin: Mediterranean region

### Description:

A stout, spiny perennial herb to 2m high. Stems are greyish-green, thick, erect and ridged.

**Flowers:** To 100mm across, blue to purple surrounded by a series of stout bracts, each terminating in a rigid spine.

**Leaves:** To 500mm long, greyish-green above and densely covered in white hair below, deeply divided several times and tipped with yellowish spines.

### Notes:

- Seeds are generally spread by wind (feathery hairs act like a parachute), birds and livestock.
- Most seeds can remain viable in the soil for up to five years.
- Spreads easily through grazing land, grasslands, heathlands and riparian (streamside) vegetation.

**Status:** Regionally Controlled Weed.

### Weed treatment:





## Slender Thistle

*Carduus pycnocephalus* ASTERACEAE

Origin: Europe and North Africa

### Description:

An annual herb to about 1m high. Stems and upper leaves often appear woolly.

**Flowers:** Pink or purple flower heads are small, less than 10mm across, usually in clusters of 4-10 and surrounded by several rows of spined bracts.

**Leaves:** To 250mm long, stalked, deeply lobed with numerous spines. Stem leaves to 200mm long are deeply lobed, with spines along the margins. Leaves are often absent just below the flower heads.

**Status:** Restricted Weed.

### Weed treatment:





## Spear Thistle

*Cirsium vulgare* ASTERACEAE

Origin: Europe, Asia and North Africa

### Description:

An annual or biennial herb to about 1.5m with spiny wings on its stems.

**Flowers:** 20-50mm across, reddish to purple, solitary or in groups of 2 or 3 at the ends of branches. They are surrounded by greenish, spine-tipped bracts.

**Leaves:** Rosette leaves are stalked and up to 350mm long. Stem leaves to 250mm long have many small prickles on the upper surface. Older leaves are deeply lobed and armed with spines on the margins.

**Status:** Restricted Weed.

### 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:





## Aparagus Fern

*Asparagus scandens* LILIACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

Twining, climbing perennial herb growing from underground tubers with aerial parts to 2m high on supporting vegetation.

**Flowers:** Small white to pinkish flowers, topped by yellow anthers, appear in late winter and spring.

**Leaves:** (Cladodes) Somewhat fern-like in appearance. Spear-shaped and pointed towards the tips. Usually grouped in three's at each node.

**Fruit:** Orange to red berries may remain on plant until next flowering season.

### Notes:

- Becoming more common in townships, invading reserves and moister areas.
- Twining stems are very strong and can strangle small indigenous plants.
- Dense roots and tuber mats are thick and prevent moisture penetrating to the soil below.
- Seeds are dispersed by birds, and new plants also form from dumping of roots in garden waste.

**Status:** Weed of National Significance.

### Weed treatment:





## 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:





## Blue Periwinkle

*Vinca major* APOCYNACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

A trailing perennial herb with long, tough stems capable of covering hundreds of square metres. Forms a dense intertwined ground cover.

**Flowers:** Solitary lilac-blue flowers to 50mm in diameter appear in spring in the leaf axils. Flowers have five petals widely spreading and squared at ends.

**Leaves:** Dark green, oval shiny leaves with pointed tips.

**Fruit:** A capsule to 50mm long, tapering, in pairs and joined at the base.

### Notes:

- Produces little or no seed and is spread primarily by stems rooting at the tips.
- The species can cover large areas, especially in shaded moist locations.
- Will also grow in a wide range of conditions on moderately fertile soils provided there is seasonal moisture.

**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:





## Cape Ivy

*Delairea odorata* ASTERACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A robust climbing or scrambling perennial herb to 4m or more high. Stems and runners tend to be purple and are easily broken.

**Flowers:** Fragrant small, bright yellow, daisy-like flowers in small clusters in winter. They do not have ray florets (petals).

**Leaves:** Dense, pale green, slightly fleshy, smooth ivy-like leaves, silvery below.

**Fruit:** Reddish-brown, tiny with a ring of slender white hairs.

### Notes:

- A dense, vigorous, fast-growing climber that twines or scrambles over associated plants.
- Forms a dense ground cover to 300mm and an overhead canopy, eventually killing the vegetation over which it climbs.
- Very shade tolerant and grows successfully in gullies, along river banks, in cool forests and in coastal scrub.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Dolichos Pea

*Dipogon lignosus* FABACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A robust, semi-woody vine climbing many metres over other vegetation to heights of 6m. Stems are initially thin but become woody and rope-like.

**Flowers:** Abundant pinkish-purple or white pea flowers appear during late winter, spring and summer.

**Leaves:** Bright green with three leaflets.

**Fruit:** After flowering, the plant produces large pea-like pods.

### Notes:

- A highly invasive plant of coastal shrubland, smothering and eliminating ground vegetation and forming a canopy over shrubs and trees.
- Seeds prolifically with seeds remaining viable for decades in the soil.
- Seed is spread by birds, in contaminated soil and in dumped garden waste.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Frequently grown in the past to quickly cover and hide structures, hence its other names: Chookhouse vine and Dunny Creeper.

### 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:





## Native Grasslands

Our remnant native grasslands and grassy woodlands are endangered ecological communities. These ecological communities can support rare and threatened flora and fauna species. Native grasses found in the region include Wallaby Grass, Spear Grass, Tussock Grass and Kangaroo Grass.

Introduced grass species, such as those featured in this guide, are capable of spreading over large areas with devastating effect. Infestations of introduced grasses cause a decline in native species and impact on agriculture through loss of productivity.

Identification of native and introduced grasses can be difficult so please seek advice.

## Wetlands

Our natural wetlands, whether lakes, swamps or marshes, and whether they are wet or dry, are home to many wonderful plants and animals which have adapted to their unique conditions.

Weed species such as Tall Wheat Grass, Phalaris and Spiny Rush can have a major impact on wetland values leading to biodiversity loss.



## Chilean Needle-grass

*Nassella neesiana* POACEAE

Origin: South America

### Description:

A tussock-forming perennial grass, up to 1.2m high.

**Flower/Seed head:** Loose, open, drooping panicle at the end of the flowering stems. The bracts holding the flowers are purple, giving the whole plant a distinctive purplish colour. Flowers and sets seed during spring and early summer. Seeds: pale brown and sharply pointed. Between the seed and its tail (awn) there is a characteristic raised ring (corona) 1-1.5mm long with small teeth encircling the awn. Cleistogenes (hidden seeds) are also produced at the stem nodes (elbows) and base of the plant beneath the leaf sheath.

**Leaves:** Narrow, coarse leaves 5mm wide and 300mm long, with distinct ribs running from base to tip and slightly serrated edges. At the base of each leaf is a 3mm long smooth membranous ligule with two small tufts of erect hairs.

### Notes:

- As a vigorous competitor, it is a major threat to both conservation and agricultural lands.
- Capable of producing up to 22,000 seeds per square metre with a long-lived seed bank.
- The “needle-sharp” seeds can cause physical harm to both animals and humans.
- Seeds with their long corkscrew-like awns and sharp tip are easily spread by wind, machinery, vehicles, animals, clothing and footwear.
- The stem seeds enable the plant to reproduce even if flowering is prevented by slashing or grazing.

**Similar native species:** Similar to several native Australian Spear grasses *Austrostipa* sp. The seeds of native *Austrostipa* sp. appear similar except that they don't have the corona.

**Status:** Weed of National Significance, Restricted Weed.

**Weedy facts:** Thought to have entered Australia from South America as a contaminant of wool or fodder. Trials have shown that Chilean Needle-grass can out-compete Serrated Tussock.

### Weed treatment:





## Kikuyu

*Pennisetum clandestinum* POACEAE

Origin: Eastern Africa

### Description:

A vigorous perennial grass with long rhizomes and trailing stems that produce roots.

**Flower/Seed head:** Inconspicuous as the seed heads are largely concealed within the leaf sheath.

**Leaves:** Blades, up to 200mm in length, have a prominent mid-rib. Leaf sheaths overlap.

### Notes:

- Occurs in coastal heathlands and dunes, grasslands, grassy woodlands, moist forests and riparian areas.
- Forms a dense mat, growing over itself and any other vegetation in its way, thus eliminating all other ground flora.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

**Weedy facts:** Kikuyu is named after the Kikuyu people of Kenya.

### Weed treatment:





## Large Quaking Grass

*Briza maxima* POACEAE

Origin: Southern U.S.A.

### Description:

A slender annual growing to 600mm high.

**Flower/Seed head:** Heads are loose and finely branched with up to 15 large spikelets (10-25mm long and 8-15mm wide).  
Spring flowering.

**Leaves:** Hairless leaves, 10mm wide and 200mm long

### Notes:

- Occurs in most vegetation and soil types.
- Shivery Grass *Briza minor* has numerous small spikelets (less than 5mm long).
- Both species are known to have displaced ground orchids and low-growing indigenous herbs.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Mexican Feather Grass

*Nasella tenuissima* POACEAE

Origin: Central and South America

### Description:

A densely-tufted perennial tussock grass growing to about 700mm high.

**Flower/Seed head:** 150–250mm long and green or purplish in colour supported on flowering stems which are round, smooth and hairless, with 2–3 nodes. Seed: 2–3mm long and encased by two purple or reddish-brown glumes with an awn attached centrally to the end of the seed.

**Leaves:** Narrow and up to 600mm long, tightly rolled with overlapped edges which feel coarse when sliding fingers downwards along the leaf blade. The ligule is papery and smooth.

### Notes:

- Mexican Feather-grass is a potentially serious new weed which is not known to be naturalised in Australia to date.
- Plants wrongly labelled were sold as an ornamental grass in Victoria during early 2008.

**Status:** State Prohibited Weed.

**Weedy facts:** Mexican Feather Grass escaped from cultivation in New Zealand and has become a weed that is continuing to spread.

**Weed treatment:** Please do not attempt to dispose of this weed yourself. If you think you have purchased or seen a Mexican Feather Grass plant, please contact the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (Ph. 136186).



## Pampas Grass

*Cortaderia selloana* POACEAE

Origin: South America

### Description:

Large tussock-forming perennial to 4m high.

**Flower/Seed head:** Large white feathery flower heads appear on long stalks in autumn. Small seeds are produced in large quantities during winter and spring.

**Leaves:** Long, narrow, sharp-edged leaves grow from the base.

### Notes:

- Commonly planted around dams and in gardens, this species forms dense, impenetrable thickets.
- Accumulated dead plant material increases fire fuel loads especially in residential areas.
- Individual flower heads contain huge numbers of seeds – up to 100,000 seeds per flower head.
- Spreads very easily along roadsides and into native vegetation as the seeds are dispersed freely by the wind for up to 25 kilometres. It also reproduces by underground rhizomes.
- The large root system on established plants can extend to 3.5m deep.
- Pink Pampas Grass *Cortaderia jubata*, is also invasive.
- Large plants may require mechanical removal.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Panic Veldgrass

*Ehrharta erecta* POACEAE

Origin: South Africa

### Description:

A perennial grass to 800mm high with short rhizomes.

**Flower/Seed head:** Flower head at maturity is open and spreading with spikelets to 5mm long. Spring to summer flowering.

**Leaves:** Blades are flat and soft, 2-10mm wide and up to 200mm long, becoming blotched as they age.

### Notes:

- The Veldgrass species came into Australia as a pasture species and for erosion control.
- Poses a threat to roadsides, grassy woodlands, forests, heathlands and riparian areas.
- Annual Veldgrass *Ehrharta longifolia* is also a problem weedy grass in the area.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Paspalum

*Paspalum dilatatum* POACEAE

Origin: South America

### Description:

Perennial loosely tufted summer growing grass to 1m high with short rhizomes.

**Flower/Seed head:** Borne on aerial stems to 200mm high with 3-5 hanging green or purplish spikes up to 120 mm long.

**Leaves:** Blades are flat with finely wavy edges, 12mm wide and 200mm long.

### Notes:

- Also known as Caterpillar Grass.
- A common pasture species as it grows vigorously in summer provided it receives high moisture.
- Occurs in heathlands, grasslands, woodlands, forests, wetlands and riparian areas.
- Its dense habit of growth smothers all ground flora.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Phalaris

*Phalaris aquatica* POACEAE

Origin: Mediterranean region

### Description:

A tufted perennial to 1.6m high with greyish to bluish-grey leaves.

**Flower/Seed head:** Dense and compact cylindrical flower heads to 150mm long.

**Leaves:** Flat and hairless, 4-15mm wide and 150-400mm long.

### Notes:

- Also known as Toowoomba Canary Grass
- Widely grown as a pasture species, this grass easily spreads onto roadsides and along drainage ditches and invades heathland, woodlands, damp forests, riparian vegetation and wetlands.
- It forms large tough clumps that smother most other ground covers.
- Pink sap exudes from stems when cut at base.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## 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:

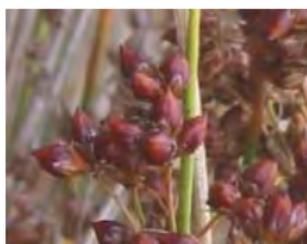
- A major agricultural weed in the region that has also invaded native grasslands, pastures, grassy woodlands, roadsides and riparian areas.
- Large, vigorous plants can produce 100,000 seeds annually. Seed remains viable in the soil for 10-15 years.
- Seeds are easily spread by wind, machinery and vehicles, 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:





## Spiny Rush

*Juncus acutus* JUNCACEAE

Origin: Europe, Africa and North America

### Description:

A brown and green tussocky perennial rush to 1.6m tall.

**Flower/Seed head:** Pith-filled flowering stems to 4mm wide bear flower heads to 130mm long, consisting of clusters of flowers, with leaf-like bracts to 250mm long at the base of flower head. These bracts terminate in a stiff sharp point. Flowers throughout year but mostly in spring and summer. Seed: An ovoid three-celled brown capsule to 6mm long. Seeds have a tail at each end.

**Leaves:** Pith-filled leaves also terminate in a stiff sharp point.

### Notes:

- Spiny Rush usually grows in low-lying damp, low fertility areas and occasionally in saltmarshes and disturbed saline areas. It is considered an invasive weed.
- Stems and leaves arise from the base at different angles giving the plant a globe shape.
- Spread by seed. Much of the spread appears to be by seed-contaminated mud attached to vehicles and animals.

**Similar native species:** Confused with Sea Rush *Juncus kraussii*, an indigenous salt marsh species.

**Status:** Restricted Weed.

### Weed treatment:





## Sweet Vernal Grass

*Anthoxanthum odoratum* POACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

A sweet-smelling, tufted perennial pasture grass up to 800mm high.

**Flower/Seed head:** Narrow and dense up to 75mm long which becomes more open as it ripens, turning from green to pale brown.

**Leaves:** Flat and bright green, 8mm wide and 200mm long.

### Notes:

- Also known as Vanilla Grass, the leaves contain coumarin which gives a “new mown hay” smell.
- It has invaded most vegetation and soil types, and tends to out-compete indigenous grasses. It could be mistaken for the indigenous species Reed Bent-grass *Deyeuxia quadriseta*.
- May produce more than 1250 seeds per plant. Most seed germinates with a year or two but some appears to remain dormant for several years.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire

### Weed treatment:





## Tall Wheatgrass

*Lophopyrum ponticum* POACEAE

Origin: Europe

### Description:

A very tall perennial grass, usually about 1m tall, which is thick-stemmed.

**Flower/Seed head:** Long erect spikes to 40mm with stalkless spikelets to 25mm which grow out of the stem, each spikelet has about 8-12 closely overlapping florets. Spring to autumn flowering.

**Leaves:** Long, blue-green in colour, flat to in-rolled, and prominently veined with sharply pointed tips and rough upper surface.

### Notes:

- Introduced into Victoria as a fodder and reclamation grass for salt-affected soils.
- Considered to be a serious weed when it escapes into native wetland environments.
- Greatly increases fire risk as large clumps dry out and mature.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Texas Needle-grass

*Nassella leucotricha* POACEAE

Origin: Southern Nth America

### Description:

A perennial tussock-forming grass up to 1-1.5m high.

**Flower/Seed head:** The seed head is up to 250mm long on erect and unbranched stems which are mostly hairless. Flowers and sets seed during spring and early summer. Seed: changes from pale brown to purple at maturity. Between the seed and its tail (awn) there is a characteristic raised ring (corona) with long thin hairs. The awn is 35-60mm long, bent twice with 10-20mm to first bend. Cleistogenes (hidden stem seeds) may be present.

**Leaves:** The blades are mid to dark green, flat or slightly in-rolled, 5mm wide and 300mm long.

### Notes:

- Also known as Texas Wintergrass in its native Texas.
- The sharp seeds can cause physical harm to animals and humans.
- Seeds are easily spread by machinery, vehicles, animals, clothing and footwear and also by wind and water.
- Highly invasive and capable of forming dense infestations, affecting pastures, native grasslands and woodlands.
- Similar to Chilean Needle-grass, Texas Needle-grass can be distinguished by the long thin hairs on the corona (Chilean has short tooth-like hairs)

**Similar native species:** Similar to several native species of Spear grass *Austrostipa* sp. but distinguishable by a distinct collar or ring around the top of the mature seed. The seeds of native Spear grasses appear similar except they don't have the corona.

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:





## Yorkshire Fog

*Holcus lanatus* POACEAE

Origin: Northern Europe

### Description:

A grey-green tufted perennial grass to 1m high.

**Flower/Seed head:** The soft branched spike up to 200mm long, pinkish-purple in colour when young, initially narrow and dense, but becoming more open and straw coloured as seed matures. Flowers in spring to summer.

**Leaves:** Blades are up to 3-10mm wide and 250mm long and covered in velvety hairs. The bases of the shoots are white with pink veins.

### Notes:

- It may have been named after the “Yorkshire Fogs” as it prefers damp wet conditions. Also known as Velvet-Grass and Meadow Soft Grass.
- A rapid coloniser of disturbed grounds, wet pastures, roadsides, grasslands and wetlands forming a dense stand that excludes other plants and reduces species diversity.
- A larger and more robust grass than Annual Fog (*Holcus annuus*).

**Status:** Environmental weed in Surf Coast Shire.

### Weed treatment:



## Trees &amp; Shrubs

<b>African Box-thorn</b> <i>Lycium ferocissimum</i> SOLANACEAE	9
<b>Blackberry</b> <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> spp. <i>aggregata</i> ROSACEAE	10
<b>Boneseed</b> <i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera</i> ssp. <i>monilifera</i> ASTERACEAE	11
<b>Bushy Yate</b> <i>Eucalyptus lehmannii</i> MYRTACEAE	12
<b>Cape Broom (Montpellier Broom)</b> <i>Genista monspessulana</i> FABACEAE	13
<b>Cape Wattle</b> <i>Paraserianthes lophantha</i> MIMOSACEAE	14
<b>Coast Tea-tree</b> <i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i> MYRTACEAE	15
<b>Cootamundra Wattle</b> <i>Acacia baileyana</i> MIMOSACEAE	16
<b>Cotoneaster</b> <i>Cotoneaster glaucophyllus</i> ROSACEAE	17
<b>English Broom</b> <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> FABACEAE	18
<b>Flax-leaf Broom</b> <i>Genista linifolia</i> FABACEAE	19
<b>Golden Wreath Wattle</b> <i>Acacia saligna</i> FABACEAE	20
<b>Gorse</b> <i>Ulex europaeus</i> FABACEAE	21
<b>Hawthorn</b> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> ROSACEAE	22
<b>Honey-myrtle – Giant</b> <i>Melaleuca armillaris</i> MYRTACEAE	23
<b>Honey-myrtle – Green</b> <i>Melaleuca diosmifolia</i> MYRTACEAE	24
<b>Honey-myrtle – Mauve</b> <i>Melaleuca nesophila</i> MYRTACEAE	25
<b>Honey-myrtle – Red</b> <i>Melaleuca hypericifolia</i> MYRTACEAE	26
<b>Italian Buckthorn</b> <i>Rhamnus alaternus</i> RHAMNACEAE	27
<b>Kohuhu</b> <i>Pittosporum tenuifolium</i> PITTOSPORACEAE	28
<b>Mirror-Bush</b> <i>Coprosma repens</i> RUBIACEAE	29
<b>Myrtle-leaf Milkwort</b> <i>Polygala myrtifolia</i> var. <i>myrtifolia</i> POLYGALACEAE	30
<b>Peppercorn Tree</b> <i>Schinus molle</i> ANACARDIACEAE	31
<b>Pincushion Hakea</b> <i>Hakea laurina</i> PROTEACEAE	32
<b>Sweet Pittosporum</b> <i>Pittosporum undulatum</i> PITTOSPORACEAE	33
<b>Radiata Pine</b> <i>Pinus radiata</i> PINACEAE	34
<b>Sallow Wattle</b> <i>Acacia longifolia</i> subsp. <i>longifolia</i> MIMOSACEAE	35
<b>Spanish Heath</b> <i>Erica lusitanica</i> ERICACEAE	36
<b>Sweet Briar</b> <i>Rosa rubiginosa</i> ROSACEAE	37
<b>Sweet Hakea</b> <i>Hakea drupacea</i> PROTEACEAE	38
<b>Tree Lucerne (Tagasaste)</b> <i>Chamaecytisus palmensis</i> FABACEAE	39
<b>Willows</b> <i>Salix</i> sp. SALICACEAE	40

## Herbs and Succulents

<b>African Weed-Orchid</b> <i>Disa bracteata</i> ORCHIDACEAE	41
<b>Agapanthus (African Lily)</b> <i>Agapanthus praecox</i> ssp. <i>orientalis</i> LILIACEAE	42
<b>Aloe</b> <i>Aloe maculata</i> ALOEACEAE	43
<b>Angled Onion</b> <i>Allium triquetrum</i> LILIACEAE	44
<b>Arum Lily</b> <i>Zantedeschia aethiopica</i> ARACEAE	45
<b>Bulbil Sparaxis</b> <i>Sparaxis bulbifera</i> IRIDACEAE	46
<b>Cape Tulip (One-Leaf)</b> <i>Moraea flaccida</i> IRIDACEAE	47
<b>Cape Weed</b> <i>Arctotheca calendula</i> ASTERACEAE	48
<b>Cretan Trefoil</b> <i>Lotus creticus</i> FABACEAE	49
<b>Fennel</b> <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> APIACEAE	50

<b>Freesia</b> <i>Freesia alba</i> x <i>F. leichtlinii</i> IRIDACEAE	51
<b>Galenia</b> <i>Galenia pubescens</i> AIZOACEAE	52
<b>Gazania</b> <i>Gazania linearis</i> ASTERACEAE	53
<b>Gladiolus-Sweet and Gladiolus-Wild</b> <i>Gladiolus tristis</i> and <i>Gladiolus undulatus</i> IRIDACEAE	54
<b>Horehound</b> <i>Marrubium vulgare</i> LAMIACEAE	55
<b>Large-flowered Wood Sorrel</b> <i>Oxalis purpurea</i> OXALIDACEAE	56
<b>Montbretia</b> <i>Crocsmia</i> x <i>crocsmiflora</i> IRIDACEAE	57
<b>Narrow-leaf Clover</b> <i>Trifolium angustifolium</i> FABACEAE	58
<b>Paterson's Curse</b> <i>Echium plantagineum</i> BORAGINACEAE	59
<b>Purple Groundsel</b> <i>Senecio elegans</i> ASTERACEAE	60
<b>Ragwort</b> <i>Senecio jacobaea</i> ASTERACEAE	61
<b>Sea Spurge</b> <i>Euphorbia paralias</i> EUPHORBIACEAE	62
<b>Soursob</b> <i>Soursob Oxalis pes-caprae</i> OXALIDACEAE	63
<b>Artichoke Thistle</b> <i>Cynara cardunculus</i> ASTERACEAE	64
<b>Slender Thistle</b> <i>Carduus pycnocephalus</i> ASTERACEAE	65
<b>Spear Thistle</b> <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> ASTERACEAE	66
<b>Wild Watsonia</b> <i>Watsonia meriana</i> 'Bulbillifera' IRIDACEAE	67
<b>Climbers and Creepers</b>	
<b>Aparagus Fern</b> <i>Asparagus scandens</i> LILIACEAE	68
<b>Bluebell Creeper</b> <i>Billardiera fusiformis</i> PITTOSPORACEAE	69
<b>Blue Periwinkle</b> <i>Vinca major</i> APOCYNACEAE	70
<b>Bridal Creeper</b> <i>Asparagus asparagoides</i> LILIACEAE	71
<b>Cape Ivy</b> <i>Delairea odorata</i> ASTERACEAE	72
<b>Dolichos Pea</b> <i>Dipogon lignosus</i> FABACEAE	73
<b>English Ivy</b> <i>Hedera helix</i> ARALIACEAE	74
<b>Grasses and Rushes</b>	
<b>Chilean Needle-grass</b> <i>Nassella neesiana</i> POACEAE	76
<b>Kikuyu</b> <i>Pennisetum clandestinum</i> POACEAE	77
<b>Large Quaking Grass</b> <i>Briza maxima</i> POACEAE	78
<b>Mexican Feather Grass</b> <i>Nassella tenuissima</i> POACEAE	79
<b>Pampas Grass</b> <i>Cortaderia selloana</i> POACEAE	80
<b>Panic Veldgrass</b> <i>Ehrharta erecta</i> POACEAE	81
<b>Paspalum</b> <i>Paspalum dilatatum</i> POACEAE	82
<b>Phalaris</b> <i>Phalaris aquatica</i> POACEAE	83
<b>Serrated Tussock</b> <i>Nassella trichotoma</i> POACEAE	84
<b>Spiny Rush</b> <i>Juncus acutus</i> JUNCACEAE	85
<b>Sweet Vernal Grass</b> <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> POACEAE	86
<b>Tall Wheatgrass</b> <i>Lophopyrum ponticum</i> POACEAE	87
<b>Texas Needle-grass</b> <i>Nassella leucotricha</i> POACEAE	88
<b>Yorkshire Fog</b> <i>Holcus lanatus</i> POACEAE	89

Further reading:

*Weeds of the south-east: an identification guide for Australia*  
by F J Richardson, R G Richardson and R C H Shepherd

*Garden Weeds* by B Morphet

*Weed: The Ultimate Gardener's Guide to Organic Weed Control*  
by T Marshall

### **Assistance with Weed Control**

Many contractors are prepared to carry out weed control on both private and public land. Some specialise in the manual removal of woody weeds (shrubs and trees) and others in herbicide application.

Look up weed and pest control in the Yellow Pages or local community newspaper.