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What are weeds?

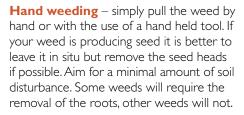
Weeds are plants that are in the wrong place. A wattle in the veggie patch, a plum tree in the bush, turf grass in the creek can all be considered weeds. Weeds are weedy because they grow very well in the environment in which they find themselves. Often the insects and other animals that eat them in their place of origin are absent. Some Australian natives have become weeds overseas, for example Paperbarks in the Florida Everglades. Most weeds are here because of deliberate introduction as garden or agricultural plants.

Weeds cause problems in the spaces that they grow. They outcompete or smother desirable plants, contribute to fuel loads in bushfire prone areas or aggravate allergies and asthma. Control of weeds improves habitat for native species and liveability for people.

This brochure lists some of those plants that are common weeds of parklands and gardens in Banyule and suggests methods of control.

Control & Removal Techniques







Cut and paint/drill and fill — methods for killing woody vegetation by applying a small amount of herbicide to the cambium or sap layer of the stem or trunk. Herbicide can be applied to a cut surface immediately after the sap is exposed or can be applied into holes drilled in the trunk. An inexpensive and quick way of killing woody weeds without digging out the roots.



Spraying – use herbicide to kill the weed. This method is used where broad scale weed control is required such as in parkland. Always use herbicide in accordance with the label and, when in doubt, hire a professional. Never spray herbicides in hot or windy conditions or you will kill more than just the weeds. Only use herbicides when plants are actively growing.



Suppression – use mulch or vigorous plant growth to supress the growth of weeds. Works best to keep new weeds from germinating rather than killing existing weeds.



Solarisation – using the heat of the sun to kill shallow rooted weeds. Cover the weeds with black plastic for a summer to retain heat. Works well with fleshy weeds like Wandering Trad.

Prioritisation and timing: not a control technique but an important consideration.

Remove those weeds that have the greatest potential to spread first. Attack weeds when you'll get the best outcomes for your time, i.e. hand weed before plants go to seed, use herbicide while plants are actively growing. Plan how you are going to keep weeds from coming back before you begin.



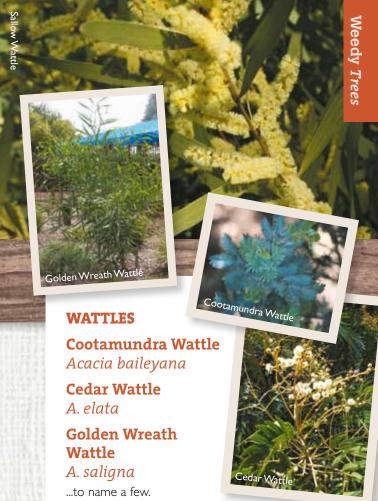
Disposal

Dispose of weeds carefully. Weeds with long lived seeds and bulbs are not suitable for composting and should be disposed of in your green waste bin. The dumping of green waste in Banyule Parklands transports weeds to new areas, threatening our Biodiversity. Council offers two pre-booked curb-side collections to Banyule households each year which is an excellent way of getting rid of weeds.



Trees can be very difficult weeds to remove when they get big so it's vital to keep an eye out for seedlings and hand weed them while small. Larger saplings can be cut low and the stump treated with herbicide to prevent re-growth. Arborists are required to remove larger specimens. In some situations it may be appropriate to kill a weedy tree by drilling and filling and leave it in situ. This is much cheaper than removal but can leave you with an eyesore. Do not do this if the tree is overhanging structures or areas where people go.





Origin: Australia, various locations

Some wattles have been introduced from other parts of Australia as potential garden plants but some have become garden escapees and spread vigorously. Cootamundra Wattle for example grows very well in poor soils and its silver foliage makes it a popular plant with some gardeners. There are local alternatives that allow us to experience wattle blossom without loss of biodiversity. It can be difficult to identify wattles to species level, so seek advice. Take care when purchasing wattles not to introduce a problem to your garden.











Origin: From Mallacoota North into Southern Qld - a native but still a weed.

A densely canopied tree with creamy coloured highly scented flowers in spring with orange berries with sticky seeds in autumn. Few plants are able to survive underneath Pittosporums, such is their ability to exclude other species. Sticky seeds are readily transported on shoes so control of this weed is a top priority for bushland and gardens.









Desert Ash Fraxinus angustifolia subsp. angustifolia

Origin: South-West Asia

A deciduous tree with pendulous seed pods in summer. Other Ash species can by highly ornamental and not problematic but this one has an enormous seed load and germinates readily. Watch out for seedlings as mature plants are expensive to remove.









Similar to weedy trees, shrubs are most easily removed when young. Many of those species we have problems with in Banyule were originally planted for use as hedges so are dense and prickly. Those with berries are spread by birds and so have the potential to spread far and wide. Hand-pull young seedlings and cut and paint the larger individuals. Replant with native shrubs of a similar form to ensure that bird habitat is retained.



Boxthorn *Lycium ferocissimum*

Origin: Africa



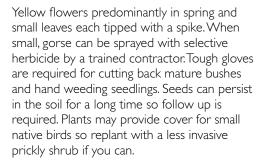
Dense prickly shrub with small leaves. Flowers and seeds prolifically when conditions suit. With prickles long and sharp enough to deter grazing by giraffes in its native Africa, care must be taken when removing this shrub.



Gorse Ulex europaeus

Origin: Europe

Declared Noxious Weed (Regionally Controlled)













Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus.* spp. aggregate

Origin: Europe

Declared Noxious Weed (Regionally Controlled)

This familiar weed forms dense thickets of prickly canes. White flowers appear in late spring followed by berries in late summer and early autumn. Blackberries are dispersed by birds and foxes and can provide shelter to foxes and rabbits as well as a food source. Thickets have multiple rooting points so cut back the canes as low as possible and spray the re-growth that results. Roots can also be dug out with a mattock but always wear thick gloves when handling this plant.





Flax-leaf Broom Genista linifolia

Cape Broom

G. monspessulana



Declared Noxious Weeds (Regionally Controlled)

Cape Broom

Medium shrubs with yellow flowers in winter and spring, seed pods in summer. Flax-leaf Broom has small grey leaves while the leaves of Cape Broom are small and trifoliate (held in a cluster of 3 leaflets). Often found in disturbed sites and along roadways where nicks from mower blades stimulate seeds to germinate.













Origin: China

Cotoneasters have white flowers in spring and red berries in late summer. They have been used extensively as screening plants because of their dense form. They have great capacity to spread so if you have one in your garden or school grounds plan to replace it with something less invasive. Berries are mildly toxic to people.







Boneseed

Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. monilifera

Origin: South Africa Declared Noxious Weed (Regionally Controlled)

This small attractive bush has yellow flowers in spring and green berries in summer. It commonly invades disturbed land so can be found on roadsides and along railway lines. It is relatively easy to remove with a mattock.













Weedy climbers have the capacity to smother bushland and garden plants depriving them of light. They can engulf sheds and fences destabilising them under their weight. In many cases climbers can be cut off at the base and the stems and leaves left to die held aloft in the trees. The roots can be dug out or regrowth sprayed with herbicide. Never try to spray a climber up high as you're likely to create a lot of herbicide drift and kill half your garden. Creepers can gain height with support but often run across the ground smothering native herbs and grasses. Many creepers have multiple rooting points so are very difficult to control as all rooted sections need to be killed or removed.

Kapok/Moth Vine Araujia sericifera

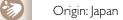
Origin: South America

This vigorous climber is worthwhile controlling as the sap is a skin irritant. Flowers are cream coloured, bell shaped and appear in summer. Balloon shaped fruit release many fluffy seeds. Cut it low to the ground while wearing rubber gloves.









This climber has long thin brown arching stems with oval leaves and delicate white flowers. Stems take root where they touch down. Gradually remove and dispose of the stems and dig the root bundles out with a mattock.





Bridal Creeper *Asparagus asparagoides*

Origin: South Africa
Declared Noxious Weed (Restricted)

A Weed of National Significance, this climber competes with desirable plants for sunlight in the canopy and for water and nutrients in the soil. Small leaves are held on wire-thin stems, flowers are small and white and berries are green to red. Roots are very difficult to dig out as they are attached to numerous fleshy tubers that are close to the surface but they all have to come out. This weed was introduced from Africa as a lovely addition to bridal bouquets and now devastates bushland and orchard crops. An excellent example of why current customs laws are so strict.







English Ivy *Hedera helix*







Hopefully Ivy is one weed everyone will recognise but not everyone recognises its weed potential. Kept low down Ivy does not tend to seed but once in the canopy of a tree or high on a fence it will produce copious amounts of potentially bird dispersable seed allowing it to spread rapidly. Ivy seedlings are easy to pull if spotted. Larger individuals can be severed low to the ground and the touch roots dug out. Herbicide is not very effective on well established infestations of Ivy.



Origin: Asia

The large round purple flowers are a dead giveaway of this beautiful climber introduced to Australia for ornamental reasons. Anyone who travels by train will see it growing along the cuttings where it is very difficult to access for control. Given time Morning Glory can completely take over a garden, smothering plants, fences and sheds so it should be removed while young.











Origin: Western Australia

This is a beautiful little creeper that functions quite well in suburban gardens. The problem is that it is closely related to an indigenous creeper, Common Appleberry, that Council is trying very hard to protect. In areas where Bluebell Creeper is found in gardens, the Common Appleberry hybridises and we lose a little of our natural heritage.

Wandering Trad *Tradescantia fluminensis*

Origin: South America

Easily spotted by its waxy green leaves and delicate white flowers, Wandering Trad forms thick mats of vegetation in wetter, shady areas and along waterways. Sap can irritate the skin of dogs causing a red rash on the belly. Hand weeding is laborious and time consuming as stems will root at each node that is in contact with the soil. Stem fragments will regrow if left on the ground so dispose of this weed carefully. In urban situations you can knock the plant a lot using heat. Cover it with black plastic over the summer and you can greatly reduce its vigour before weeding the last remnants.



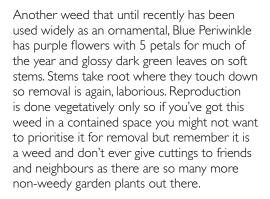




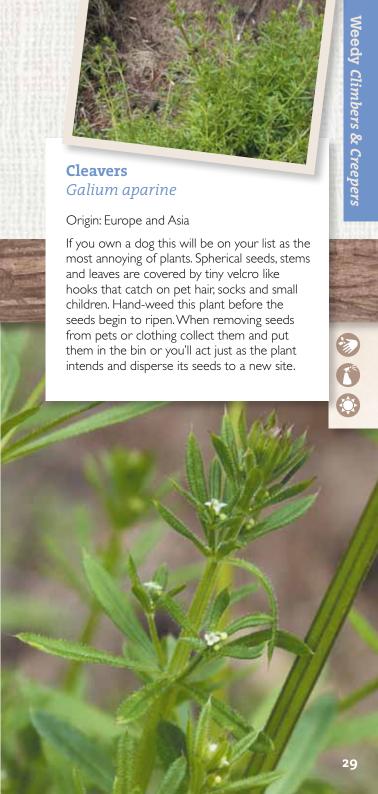




Origin: Mediterranean









How problematic weedy grasses become depends on where they are growing. Several of the grasses listed here are found in suburban lawns acting as excellent turf grass but when found in bushland areas they can compete with local plants for space and dramatically increase the fuel load and fire risk. Many grasses were introduced to Australia for use as pasture grasses so grow rapidly and produce a lot of biomass - food for stock feed. When not grazed upon these grasses quickly become a fire risk as they dry out over summer. Grasses are also the main culprit in the production of wind-borne pollen that triggers hay fever and allergies for many people.

Generally grasses are easily killed with herbicide but ongoing suppression of weeds using mulch or favourable plantings will be required to stop the next generation of grasses from growing back. When hand weeding grasses make sure you catch them before the seeds start to drop and create as little disturbance to the soil as possible. A serrated knife can be a very useful tool for cutting through roots just below the soil surface. Never dump lawn clippings into parkland.

Paspalum / Caterpillar Grass Paspalum dilatatum

Origin: South America

In mown areas, Paspalum spreads out along the ground excluding all other grasses. Its long, arching flower stems help it to spread past its parent body as the seeds drop further out. Spraying it with herbicide is the most effective control method as it can be difficult to hand-weed.



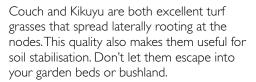


Cynodon dactylon

Kikuyu

Pennisetum clandestinum

Origin: (Couch) Middle East (Kikuyu) South Africa, Africa

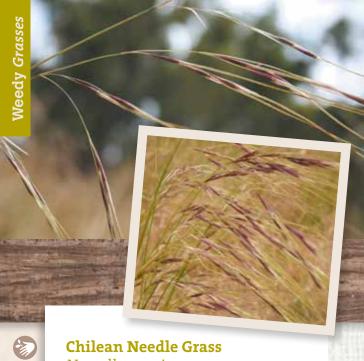














Origin: South America Declared Noxious Weed (Restricted)

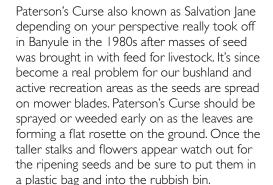
Chilean Needle Grass is a Weed of National Significance as it degrades pasture, damages livestock and rapidly invades disturbed sites. In urban areas it has the potential to harm pets as the seeds are very sharp and can burrow into the flesh quite quickly after getting caught in the fur. Banyule has large areas infested with this weed and we suspect it has been spread by mowers and earth moving equipment to which the seeds have become stuck. Council practices vehicle hygiene in these areas and home gardeners should do the same too if you ever borrow or lend mowers or line trimmers. Small infestations can be weeded or sprayed with herbicide. All seeds should be bagged and binned. It is a relative of Serrated Tussock which we have largely got on top of in Banyule.



Weedy herbs are those plants that are soft stemmed, low growing and proliferate where they are not wanted in bushland and gardens. In some cases they were introduced to Australia as garden plants but in other cases they snuck in with desirable plants as contaminants in soil. Herbs are generally easy to treat with herbicides or through hand weeding, but require persistence to prevent seed set.



Origin: Europe and North Africa Declared Noxious Weed (*Regionally Controlled*)













Artichoke Thistle Cynara cardunculus

Origin: Mediterranean
Declared Noxious Weed (Regionally Controlled)

This large thistle with spiky silver leaves is a big problem in Melbourne's west and Banyule seems to lie on the edge of its favoured habitat. It's worth keeping an eye out for the odd few that pop up. The rosette of leaves can easily be sprayed while young and flat on the ground. Hand weeding will require thick gloves and a mattock. Make sure the entire tap root has been dug out.





Soursob Oxalis pes-caprae

Origin: South Africa Declared Noxious Weed (Restricted)

With its tri-foliate leaves and numerous yellow flowers Soursob is a common site in gardens and shady parkland areas. This weed spreads by bulbs and many gardeners will pull the top part of the plant off without realising they've left a bulb to continue to grow. Hand weeding needs to be thorough and done while the soil is wet so that bulbs can be more easily found. Spraying can also be a useful technique while plants are young. Follow up will be required for 2-3 years before control can be achieved.







Solanum nigrum

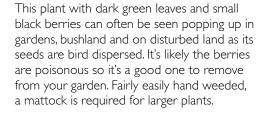
Origin: Europe and Asia













Cape Weed Arctotheca calendula

Origin: South Africa

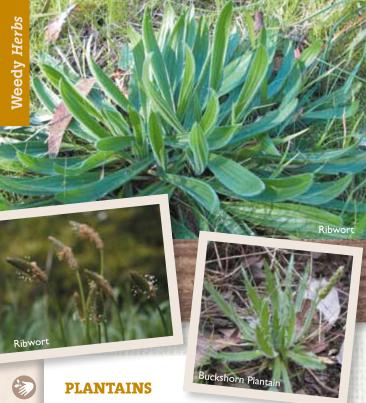
A summer flowering herb with yellow daisy flowers and deeply lobbed green leaves that are silver on the underside. This weed looks stunning when growing amongst Patterson's Curse as it often does along roadsides and open parkland. Isolated plants can be hand weeded before seed sets and new infestations can be reduced through mulching and competition with other plants.













Buckshorn Plantain Plantago coronopus

Ribwort P. lanceolata

Greater Plantain P. major

Origin: America, Europe, Africa, Asia

Plantains have a basal rosette of leaves with prominent veins. Cylindrical flower heads are held above the leaves and are dull green, turning to brown as the seeds mature. Individual plants are easy to hand weed but you might need a small trowel to remove the long tap root in hard soil. They make an easy target to spray with herbicide. Very common, you'll often see them in lawns and naturestrips.



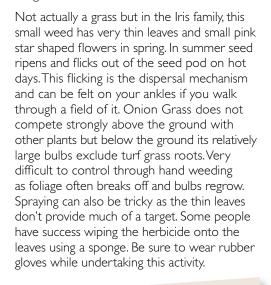


Origin: South Africa















Origin: South Africa

We've all seen the long strappy leaves and purple or white flowers of agapanthus forming dense clumps along roadsides and in gardens. Agapanthus can reproduce by seed but the most common method of dispersal is people. Seen as low maintenance and free, people regularly divide and share their clumps of agapanthus and those who are not fans of the plant sometimes donate them to school working bees or dump them in parkland. Agapanthus is common throughout Banyule and probably a low priority for removal compared with some other weeds but it certainly should not be deliberately spread to new locations when there are so many other, non-invasive species that could be planted.





Watsonia Watsonia meriana var. bulbillifera

Origin: South Africa Declared Noxious Weed (Regionally Controlled)

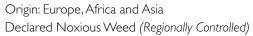
Watsonia was introduced to Australia for horticultural reasons (people thought their flowers looked nice) but they have spread prolifically. Leaves are pale green, upright and lanceolate with red or orange tubular flowers held above the leaves on stalks in late winter and spring. Watsonia forms large clumps through seed dispersal and underground corms. Hand weeding is the most appropriate form of removal for the home gardener but it will be hard work as corms are woody and quite strong.







Spear Thistle *Cirsium vulgare*



Thistles produce many seeds in summer that are dispersed by the wind so they can pop up anywhere. After germinating they produce a flat but spikey basal rosette that can be easily sprayed with herbicide. As the plant grows it becomes taller and more difficult to spray so hand weeding becomes a better option. The tap root can be long and difficult to remove. Take care to wear thick gloves when handling. Flower heads should be bagged and binned but stems and leaves can be composted.



More Information

If you've got a plant you're unsure about there are a few options.

Contact the Environment Team at Council.

We'll arrange for you to send in a photo or sample of the plant.

Visit the library for the following books:

Bush Invaders of South-East Australia by Adam Muyt

Weeds of the South-East: an identification guide for Australia

by Richardson, Richardson and Shepherd

Environmental Weeds: a field Guide for SE Australia by Kate Blood

Attend a Bushland Friends Group working bee.

Council parks staff and knowledgeable volunteers will be on hand to identify plants and give you tips for their removal.

Call Council's Parks Department for information on the next working bee on 9490 4222

Legislation

The primary piece of legislation determining the responsibilities for weed control is the Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994). It is administered by the State Government. All land managers are required under the Act to control weeds growing on their property that are listed as noxious. Land managers in Banyule include Council, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, Vic Roads, schools and private land. Noxious weeds (those listed in the Act) are not the only weeds that must be controlled to improve the habitat values of our bushland reserves or the aesthetic values of gardens so weed control efforts should not be limited to these.



All enquiries

9490 4222

enquiries@banyule.vic.gov.au www.banyule.vic.gov.au PO Box 51, Ivanhoe 3079

If you need an interpreter, please contact TIS National on 131 450 and ask to be connected to Banyule Council on 9490 4222.

إذا كنتم بحاجة إلى مترجم. الرجاء الاتصال بالخط القومي لخدمة الترجمة الهاتفية TIS على الرقم 450 131. واطلبوا إيصالكم ببلدية بانيول على الرقم 4222 9490.

若你需要口譯員,請致電131 450聯絡TIS National,要求他們為你 致電9490 4222接通Banyule市政廳。

Ako vam je potreban tumač, molimo vas, nazovite TIS National na broj 131 450 i zatražite da vas se spoji sa Vijećem općine Banyule na broj 9490 4222.

Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα τηλεφωνήστε στην Εθνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων Μεταφραστών στον αριθμό 131 450 και ζητήστε να σας συνδέσουν με τη Δημαρχία Banyule στο 9490 4222.

Se hai bisogno di un interprete chiama TIS National al numero 131 450 e chiedi di essere messo in comunicazione con il Comune di Banyule al numero 9490 4222.

Ако ви треба преведувач ве молиме jaвете се на TIS National на 131 450 и замолете да ве поврзат со Banyule Council на 9490 4222.

如果你需要一名翻译,请打电话到国家电话翻译服务处(TIS National) 131 450,再转接到Banyule市政府9490 4222

Haddii aad u baahan tahay mutarjum wac khadka qaranka oo ah TIS 131 450 weydiina in lagugu xiro Degmada Banyule tel: 9490 4222.

Nếu cấn thông dịch, xin gọi cho TIS Toàn Quốc qua số 131 450 rồi nhờ họ gọi cho Hội Đồng Thành Phố Banyule theo số 9490 4222 giùm quý vị.

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