

Carrion flower (*Orbea variegata*)

Weed management guide

Weed type
Succulent

February 2023

www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west



In NSW, weeds are regulated by the NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015. All land managers have a General Biosecurity Duty to contain the spread of weeds.

“General Biosecurity Duty means that any person dealing with plant matter must take measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate the biosecurity risk (as far as is reasonably practicable).”

The Regional priority for Carrion flower is Eradication. In order to achieve this, Land Managers are asked to: *Mitigate the risk of new weeds being introduced to their land. The plant should be eradicated from the land and the land kept free of the plant. The plant should not be bought, sold, grown, carried or released into the environment.*

For further information, contact your local Biosecurity (Weeds) Officer via Central West Local Land Services or visit NSW WeedWise.

NSW WeedWise



Habit and description

Carrion flower is a leafless succulent that grows up to 25 cm tall. It has photosynthetic fleshy stems with serrated edges about 2 cm in width. It is grey-green in colour but has a tinge of purple when it is under full exposure to the sun. The flowers have five lobes shaped like a starfish and are cream to yellow in colour with brown or purple markings. As the name suggests, the flowers emit foul smelling odor. The flowers turn into a pair of smooth pods growing up to 12 cm long. Carrion flower prefers sandy well-drained soils and arid climates.



Photo: © Mark Hamilton | NSW DPI



Photo: © Mark Hamilton | NSW DPI



Photo: © Mark Hamilton | NSW DPI



Photo: © Mark Hamilton | NSW DPI

Reproduction and spread

Carrion flower reproduces by seeds and through stem fragments. The foul smell from its flowers attracts flies which help in its pollination. Its seeds are lightweight and have white hairs (pappus) that allow for wind dispersal to distant areas where it can germinate easily. The stems can be moved by animals, surface runoff, and people (likely through improper disposal of garden waste or by machinery).

Impacts

Agriculture



- Impacts of Carrion flower to agricultural land are not well understood.
- Infestations may reduce food availability if native plants are used for grazing.

Native vegetation



- Reduces water availability to native plants growing nearby.
- This plant forms a dense matting which prevents native grasses and herbs from growing.
- It is a major concern for Chenopod shrublands as it impacts the understory of saltbush (Dunbar & Facelli 1999)

Management

Chemical



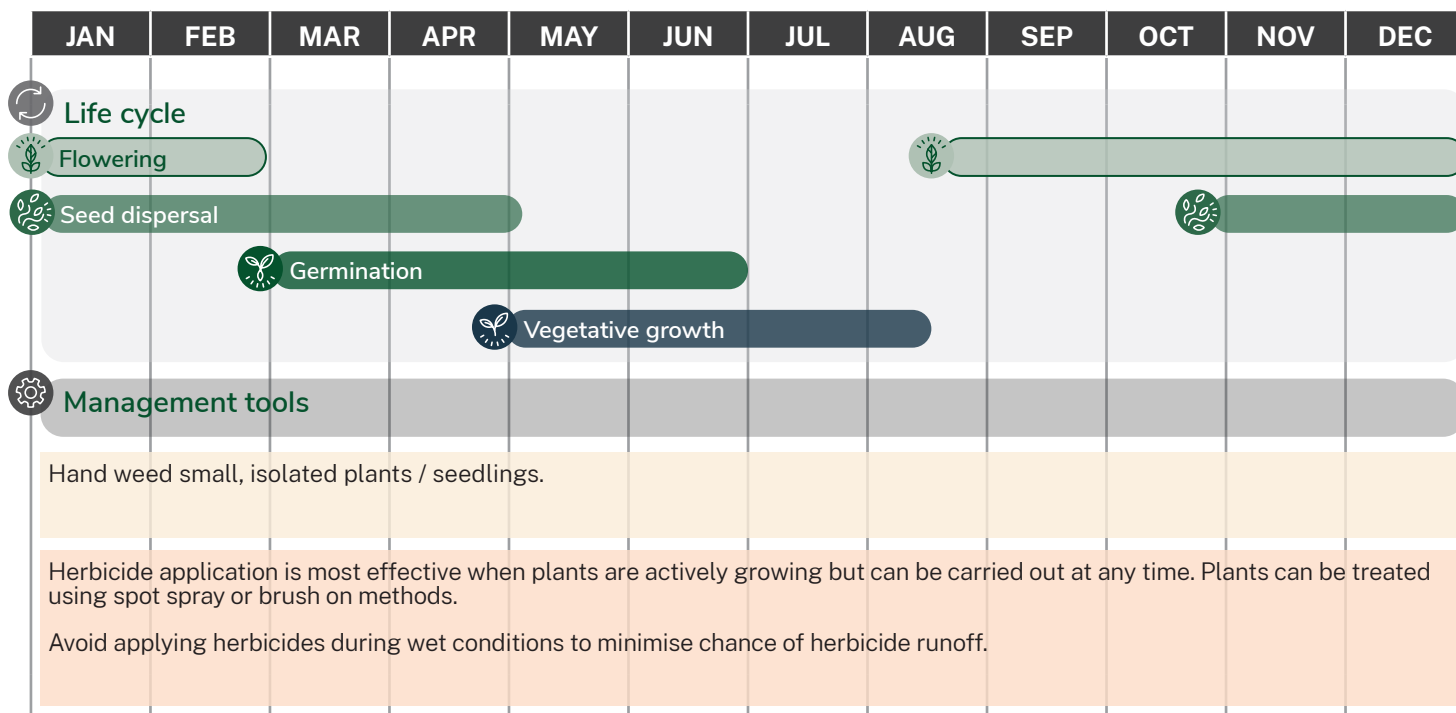
- Brush-on application is the most effective method of herbicide application against Carrion flower (Landscape South Australia, n.d.).
- Spot spraying can also be employed but the important aspect in both this method and brush-on application is to saturate all parts of the plant.
- Seek the guidance of an experienced Weeds Officer for expert advice on herbicide use.
- Visit www.apvma.gov.au for a list of registered products, product labels and permit requirements.
- NSW DPI (2020) provides a list of recommended herbicides for the control of Carrion flower at <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/CarrionFlower>

Non-chemical



- Manual removal can be used to remove isolated plants, but it is important to ensure that roots are removed as regrowth has been observed.
- Follow-up is important to ensure no regrowth occurs.

Management calendar



Optimal control options may vary depending on your location and climate. Consult an experienced Weeds Officer based in your local government area for control methods suited to your conditions.

All herbicides must be used in accordance with the herbicide label and permit requirements.

NSW WeedWise



Further information

For more information on your general biosecurity duties, visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity.

For the best guidance on how to meet this duty on your property, contact your expert Weeds Officer at your local council or via Local Land Services www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west.

References

Dunbar, K. R., & Facelli, J. M. (1999). The impact of a novel invasive species, *Orbea variegata* (African carrion flower), on the chenopod shrublands of South Australia. *Journal of Arid Environments*, 41(1), 37–48. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jare.1998.0471>

NSW DPI. (2020). *NSW WeedWise*. <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/carrionflower>

Landscape South Australia. (n.d.). *Carrion Flower (Orbea variegata): Fact sheet*. Government of South Australia. <https://cdn.environment.sa.gov.au/landscape/docs/ep/Carrion-flower-factsheet-2022.pdf>

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