

Bridal creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*)

Weed management guide

Weed type
Climber

November 2022

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 Bridal creeper is to protect assets from the weed’s impacts and to prevent its arrival and establishment in the region. In order to achieve this, Land Managers are asked to: *Mitigate the risk of new weeds being introduced to their land and reduce impacts on priority assets. 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

Bridal creeper is a smothering climber native to southern Africa. Its stems are wiry, branching and twinning and can grow to 3m long. The leaves of Bridal creeper are flattened modified stems called cladodes. They are arranged alternately along branches with shiny green surfaces. Leaves are oval with pointed tips. Flowers are white, solitary and axillary with a prominent green stripe down each folded tepal (petal). Spring flowering. Fruit are globular berries that turn red at maturity.



Photo: © John Hosking | NSW DPI



Photo: © Colin G. Wilson | NSW DPI



Photo: © John Hosking | NSW DPI



Photo: © John Hosking | NSW DPI

Reproduction and spread

Bridal creeper can produce vast numbers of fruit which can be dispersed by animal vectors. Birds are of particular concern for spreading Bridal creeper as they eat the fruit and expel the seed into native vegetation and roadsides at great distances. Foxes and rabbits have also been known to disperse the seed but to a lesser extent. Plants can spread as their root system extends through the soil. Plants can resprout from root fragments in soil and spread during soil movement, particularly from household garden waste.

Impacts

Agriculture



- Can cause losses to primary industries by shading and smothering a variety of fruit trees.
- Cover can interfere with fruit picking processes.

Native vegetation



- Bridal creeper is a Weed of National Significance (WoNS) in Australia (NSW DPI, 2017).
- Can impede root growth and seedling establishment because of its mat of underground tubers.
- It can outcompete and displace native vegetation.

Management

Chemical



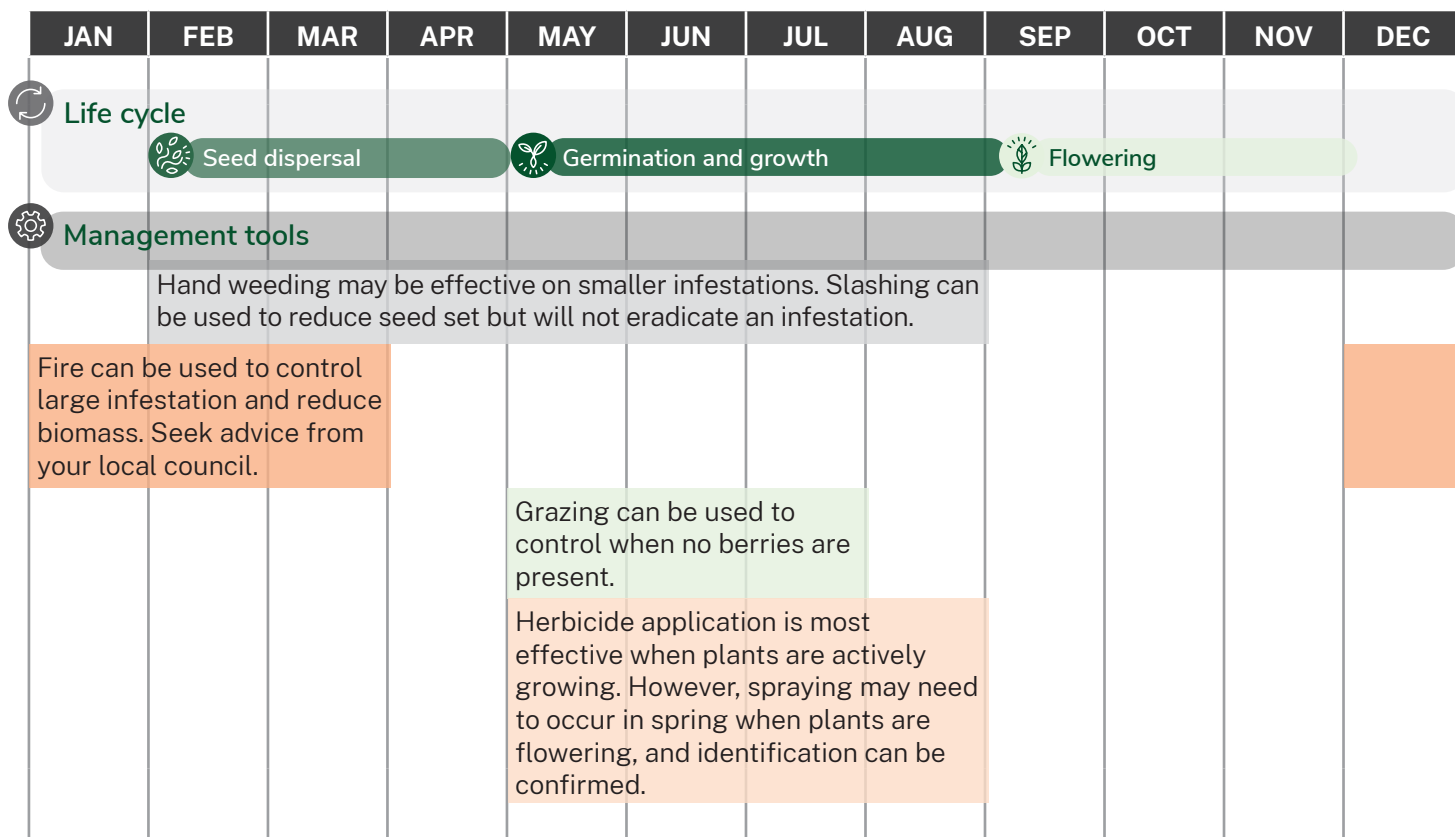
- Spot spraying is an effective method for controlling isolated plants or small infestations.
- Caution must be taken as Bridal creeper often grows in areas with native vegetation.
- 'Weed wiping' has been suggested for areas with high conservation values (Jusaitis 2017).
- Seek the guidance of an experienced 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 (2021) provides a list of recommended herbicides for the control of Bridal creeper at <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/BridalCreeper>.

Non-chemical



- Slashing can help to reduce fruit production but will not eradicate an infestation.
- Fire can be used for larger infestations by removing understory and improving access for spraying.
- Cultivation of soil can be strategically used to trigger germination of the soil seed bank, which can then be controlled.
- Grazing of sheep and wallabies can provide limited control of Bridal creeper.
- Biological control has proven effective in the management of Bridal creeper (Morin et al. 2022).

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.

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.

NSW WeedWise



References

Morin, L., Forrester, R. I., Batchelor, K., Holtkamp, R., Hosking, J. R., Lefoe, G., Virtue, J. G., & Scott, J. K. (2022). Decline of the invasive plant *Asparagus asparagoides* within the first seven years after release of biological control agents in Australia. *Biological Control*, 165, 104795. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocontrol.2021.104795>

NSW DPI. (2017). *Weed categories*. <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds/weed-categories>

NSW DPI. (2021). *NSW WeedWise*. <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/BridalCreeper>

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