

Bulbil Watsonia

Series: Environmental Weed Factsheet
Ranked 23 — Worst weed in Yarra Ranges



Common Name: Bulbil Watsonia

Botanical Name: *Watsonia meriana*
var. *bulbillifera*

Origin: South Africa

Size: 0.5-2m H, 0.5-1.5m W

Flowers: September to December

Fruit: October to December

Status: Declared noxious weed

Best removal time: Before
September

How to dispose of weeds:

Recovery & Transfer centres:

- Healesville
- Wesburn
- Coldstream
- Lysterfield

Note: For a free tip voucher to dispose weeds, contact the Environment Dept. on 1300 368 333. Limited availability.

OR

Fortnightly Garden Organics Bin Service. *Note: This service is only available to properties within eligible service areas. For more information, contact the Waste Management services on 1300 368 333.*

OR

Bundled green waste service. *Note: Check your Residential Recycling & Waste guide for details of the next service in your area.*

What it does...

Invades gardens, bushland and roadside areas where slashing and maintenance help to spread the bulbils. Tolerates full sun, moist areas, shady and windy conditions. Takes over and displaces indigenous grasses and groundcovers.

How it spreads...

Watsonia reproduces mainly by producing new corms (a corm is an underground swollen stem that forms the base of the plant) and by dropping the bulbils (inset, left) from the flower spike. Each bulbil then grows into a new plant. Plants die back to the corm and reshoot each winter. Corms and bulbils spread:

- through water,
- contaminated soil and
- dumped garden waste.
- Sale at markets and fetes. Buyer beware!

What it looks like...

The leaves are rigid, straight and sword-shaped, with a prominent mid-vein, up to 80cm long. The flower spikes can stand up to 2m. They bear two rows of dull orange, curved tubular flowers. The lower part of the flower spike carries clusters of bulbils.

How to remove it...



HAND: Easiest for small clumps. Larger areas can be forked when the soil is quite moist. Follow up is necessary to remove all corms. Most effective just before flowering.



SPRAY: Watsonia can be sprayed or leaves swiped with a glyphosate-based product. The most effective time is just before full flowering which occurs in spring.



DIG OUT: Dig out patches of Watsonia. You will need to ensure all corms are removed and take care not to drop bulbils as the plant is disturbed. If the soil is moist this is best done using a garden fork. It is important to avoid dumping the soil elsewhere.

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Indigenous alternatives to plant...

Many lily and iris alternatives exist that are indigenous to the Yarra Ranges region and would make great substitutes for the Bulbil Watsonia.

Some alternatives include:



Butterfly Flag, *Diplarrena moraea*



Tasman Flax Lily, *Dianella tasmanica*



Long-leaf Mat Rush, *Lomandra longifolia*



Photos: David Blair, Steve Meacher; Marty White

Useful websites

The following is a list of useful information resources:

- For a list of indigenous plant nurseries, see [Indigenous Plant Nurseries list](#).
- For a list of other weeds in Yarra Ranges, see [Environmental Weeds list](#).
- For a list of chemical/herbicide contractors, see [Contractor and supplier list](#).
- For descriptions of the local plants and the weeds of the Shire of Yarra Ranges see www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/plants



WARNING IF USING CHEMICALS

If you are weeding, all chemical use must be done as per manufacturers' guidelines. Ensure that you wear protective clothing/eye wear at all times. Take care and protect yourself, your family, pets and the natural environment (waterways, indigenous plants, wildlife) from coming into contact with chemicals.

When purchasing your herbicide always ask for a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Product suppliers are required to make these sheets available at the point of sale. If a sheet is not available, notify the product manufacturer and the state authority. For further information go to www.apvma.gov.au or call the Poisons Information Service on 13 11 26.

For information on State-listed noxious weeds contact the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) on 136 186. Remember, as a landowner you are required by State law to control and remove noxious weeds on your land.