

This array of garden plants, including Ivy, Cotoneaster and Sweet Pittosporum, has replaced what was once a diverse range of local native species of plants and habitats.



**Legal responsibility**

The Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 regulates primary catchment issues such as noxious weeds, pest animals and soil management. Under this Act it is the legal responsibility of the land manager to remove any weeds from their property that have been listed as 'Noxious'. The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is the responsible agency for administering this Act and a Noxious weed list is available via their website, by contacting Council or your local Environmental Volunteer/Landcare Group.



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**Related materials**

- Plans and Guidelines**
- Yarra Ranges Council Flora & Fauna Plan 2012: Sustaining biodiversity for current and future generations Yarra Ranges Council Environment Department
- Websites**
- **Environmental weeds**
    - [http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Residents/Greener\\_Living/Weed\\_Control](http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Residents/Greener_Living/Weed_Control)
    - [http://vro.dpi.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/vrosite.nsf/pages/lwm\\_pest\\_plants](http://vro.dpi.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro/vrosite.nsf/pages/lwm_pest_plants)
    - [www.dpi.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au)
  - **Native plants and vegetation communities**
    - [http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Residents/Trees\\_Vegetation/Yarra\\_Ranges\\_Plant\\_Directory/Yarra\\_Ranges\\_Local\\_Plant\\_Directory](http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Residents/Trees_Vegetation/Yarra_Ranges_Plant_Directory/Yarra_Ranges_Local_Plant_Directory)
    - [http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/eServices/Online\\_Maps](http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/eServices/Online_Maps)
    - [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/archive/landscapesystems/projects](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/archive/landscapesystems/projects)
  - **Threatened species**
    - <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/plants-and-animals/native-plants-and-animals>
  - **Revegetation guides**
    - <http://www.publish.csiro.au> – search restoration ecology

- Council productions available via council website and Community Links
- Identify and help control Environmental Weeds in the Yarra Ranges
  - Sustainable Gardening in the Shire of Yarra Ranges
  - Environmental Weed Factsheet Series
  - Yarra Ranges Council's Weed Management Strategy 2005
  - Weed Treatment Calendar
  - Grow Me Instead: A guide for Gardeners in Victoria
  - Weed Detection on Farms: A guide for Landholders

- Scientific Publications**
- Weeds of the South East: An identification guide for Australia 2011 Richardson, F.J, Richardson R.G and Shepherd, R.C.H Published by R.G and F.J Richardson, Victoria Australia
  - Practical Conservation Biology 2005, Lindenmayer, D & Burgman, M CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood Vic
  - Bush Invaders of South-Eastern Australia: A guide to the identification and control of environmental weeds found in South-East Australia 2001 Muyt A, Published by R.G and F.J Richardson, Victoria Australia
  - Corridor Ecology: The Science and Practice of Linking Landscapes for Biodiversity Conservation 2006 Hilty J.A, Lidicker Jr. W.Z and Merenlender A.M Island Press Washington DC

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Action Sheet

Environmental weeds



Environmental weeds

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Broad-scale Habitat

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Property Habitat

3

Urban Backyards

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Waterways & Wetlands

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Fire

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Threatened Species

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Weeds

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Pest Animals



## Environmental weeds

This Action sheet covers the management of environmental weeds. Weeds have had a significant impact on indigenous vegetation resulting in biodiversity losses second only to the impact of land clearing. To protect populations and habitats of existing indigenous flora and fauna, it is necessary to reduce the impact and threat of invasive plants.



This Eucalypt is being smothered to death by ivy.

### Weed control to protect indigenous flora and fauna

The flora and fauna in the Yarra Ranges are subject to a wide number of threatening processes, most notably through vegetation removal (**see Action sheet 6**) and the impact of weeds. The effective prevention, control and management of weeds requires a long-term and coordinated effort across the Yarra Ranges, on Crown land and private property alike.

Weeds by their nature take advantage of disturbances in ecosystems, with the majority needing some form of disturbance before they can invade. Unfortunately, disturbance is now common and once a weed species has established within an ecosystem it can grow out of control rapidly. Typically, weeds lack the natural pests, climatic conditions or other factors that would reduce their spread in a natural setting. Weeds often have more rapid lifecycles, giving them a competitive advantage over the slower reproducing natives.

As weed infestations spread, they transform the original natural ecosystem into one that is less diverse as they smother and hinder the growth of indigenous plants and prohibit future regeneration. The worst weeds in the Yarra Ranges are highly invasive and continue to spread from existing infestations. Some are still commercially available in nurseries and continue to be planted in gardens.

In addition to crowding out terrestrial vegetation, weeds are also responsible for choking the region's waterways, leading to loss of aquatic life, reduced availability of clean water, and poorer overall health of the river or stream (**see Action sheet 4**). Weeds can also contribute to an increase in fuel load.

### Flora and fauna goals

#### Goal 1 PROTECT

**Goal 1** is to protect the populations and habitat of indigenous flora and fauna. One of the objectives is to continue to implement Yarra Ranges Council Weed Management Strategy. Recognising the significance of weed management throughout the municipality of Yarra Ranges, Council developed the Strategy in 2005 which provides possibly the most comprehensive response by a local government authority in Victoria to the control and management of weeds to date. This document addresses Council's State and Federally legislative requirements and provides strategic direction to councils weed management activities.

#### Goal 2 ENHANCE

#### Goal 3 RESTORE

**Goals 2 and 3** focus on habitat management for the benefit of valuable flora and fauna landscape-wide and on individual properties (**see Action sheets 1 and 2**). These goals also relate to weed control. Effective environmental weed control in bushland sites maximises the health and regeneration potential of indigenous flora species and in turn the fauna that depends upon it.

#### Goal 6 STEWARDSHIP

**Goal 6** is to foster a culture of environmental stewardship in the Yarra Ranges. Our aim is to actively support and encourage schools, community groups and individuals to restore and enhance local habitat areas on public and private land through quality Council-supported programs. Within the Yarra Ranges, there are over 80 community groups such as Landcare and Friends of Groups; and more than 60 of the 84 schools in the municipality are participating in the Council's Learning for Sustainability Program. These key community groups volunteer time and resources to improve the quality of local habitat areas on both public and private lands. The volunteer effort needs to be continually supported with technical knowledge, training and equipment, and to also provide recognition for the vital role they play in ecological maintenance and restoration.

#### Goal 7 INFLUENCE

**Goal 7** is to influence flora & fauna management outside Council control. Council advocates for improved weed management funding and activity on Crown land throughout the Yarra Ranges.



Sweet Pittosporum is a very popular garden plant, but it is not a good plant for the environment: birds can spread the seeds long distances, which allows it to spread and smother bushland and forested areas.

### What you can do

A large number of weeds escape from private gardens, so it's important to be aware of what you plant on your property, to remove potential environmental weeds or at least prevent them from self-seed and spreading across your boundary.

By disposing of environmental weeds correctly you can prevent reinfestation on your property and elsewhere. The options below are recommended:

- Most environmental weeds are unsuitable to go onto the green waste pile and will need to go into landfill (Weed Wipeout Tip vouchers available)
- Putting them in organic waste bin ensures that weeds are not able to spread
- Woody weed stems can be bundled for green collection twice per annum
- Composting (excluding seed heads and species with vegetative reproduction, e.g. Wandering Trad Tradescantia fluminensis)
- Burning in accordance with Council and the Country Fire Authority prescribed burning periods and regulations



Escaped garden plants can compete directly with indigenous species for water, light and room to reproduce.

### What Council will do

Council will continue to:

- Work cooperatively with Parks Victoria, DSE, Melbourne Water, VicRoads and other partners to focus on weed management
- After the successful lobbying by Council and community members, the State Government significantly increased its investment in environmental weed control in the Dandenong Ranges. The State Government has committed \$1 million over 4 years (ending June 2014) through the Urban Fringe Weed Management Initiative (UFWMI) for weed removal in the Dandenong Ranges, particularly in the National Park. This is being matched by a further \$1 million over 4 years that Council will spend on reserves and roadsides surrounding the parks.
- Implement Yarra Ranges Council Weed Management Strategy
- Actively support and encourage schools, community groups and individuals to restore and enhance local habitat areas on public and private land through quality Council-supported programs
- Support private landholders in the fight against weeds through advice and community education programs and through the incentives, such as the Weed Wipeout Program
- Investigate other ways to support private landholders to maintain and enhance biodiversity on private land.