Montbretia *Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora*

Environmental Weed Factsheet

**Origin:** South Africa

**Size:** 60m to 90m H

**Fruit:** December to April

**Flowers:** December to April

**Best removal time:** October to April

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**What it does…**

The plant invades gardens, bushland, roadside areas and stream sides. It tolerates all conditions and can take over and displace indigenous grasses, groundcovers and over-storey regeneration.

Montbretia is a perennial herb which dies back annually. It is grass-like in appearance and often mistaken for Watsonia. It has strap-like flat leaves around 30 – 80 cm long and 1 - 2 cm wide. It was a popular garden plant due to its bright orange trumpet-shaped flowers, which form in two rows along each stem.

New growth is produced in early spring and small bulbils can be produced from the flower base. The fruit is a 3-lobed brown capsule that produces few seeds.

**How it spreads…**

- Natural regeneration is usually next to the parent plant from corms that spread rapidly underground to produce new plants.
- As a result of ground disturbance, dumping of garden waste and by attaching to machinery.
- It is often sold in nurseries, fetes or market stalls.

**How to remove it…**

To save you time and energy the most effective removal of Montbretia is just before full flowering occurs around Spring and Summer and digging out bulbs when the soil is wet.

- Remove by Hand: Hand removal is only practical for small clumps of the weed. Use a garden fork to dig all corms and underground stems to ensure complete removal. Cut stems first if the plant is in seed.

- Spray with Herbicide: Montbretia can be sprayed with a glyphosate-based product or alternatively you can swipe leaves with poison using a dabber bottle.

- Dig Out: Dig out patches of Montbretia weed carefully when soil in moist as corms break off easily; corms often form linked chains.

Please contact the Yarra Ranges Council’s Environment Department on 1300 368 333 for more information on weed removal techniques, support and training available and details of active community groups in your area.
How to dispose of weeds:
By disposing of environmental weeds correctly you can prevent re-infestation on your property and elsewhere.
- Landfill (Weed Wipeout Tip vouchers available for some species).
- Green 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 or species with vegetative reproduction, e.g. Wandering Trad).
- Burning in accordance with Council and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) prescribed burning periods and regulations.
- Recovery and transfer stations available for weed tipping are Healesville, Wesburn, Coldstream, Lysterfield and Montrose.

Using Chemicals:
Non chemical treatments is often the most effective and safe option especially on smaller scale infestations.

Where chemical use is undertaken:
- Always follow the manufacturer’s guidelines when using chemicals.
- Wear protective clothing and eyewear
- On purchasing your herbicide, always ask for a Materials Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or refer to the manufacturer’s website for specific safety guidelines and information.
- Some herbicides will kill other plants and not just the target species.
- Near waterways herbicides can be very poisonous to aquatic life.
- Use chemicals sparingly and be sure that you are using the right chemical and application technique.
- Ensure the weather conditions are suitable (e.g. minimal wind and no rain expected)
- Apply herbicides at the correct time during the plant’s growth cycle so you get the best results.

Indigenous alternatives to plant…
Many clumping alternatives indigenous to the Yarra Ranges region are available and would make great substitutes for Montbretia. Some alternatives include:

- Tasman Flax-lily, *Dianella tasmanica*
- Pale Flax-lily, *Dianella laevis*

Bare ground attracts WEEDS!!!
For effective long term weed control we recommend:
- Habitat Restoration
  - Encourages indigenous and native plant to regenerate
  - Revegetation - replanting indigenous vegetation
- Productive land use.
- Replace with non invasive garden species.