

Friend or Foe?

Take-Away Notes

A pocket guide to some particularly problem weeds, their management and better plant choices for Blairgowrie and the wider Nepean Peninsula

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Produced in association with
Gidja Walker, restoration ecologist

Blairgowrie Friends of Mornington Peninsula National Park acknowledge the support of the Victorian Government and Coastcare Victoria

Introduction

How to Use These Notes

These notes are a reminder of some of the information provided at the ecologist-guided walk and weed management events held in November 2025.

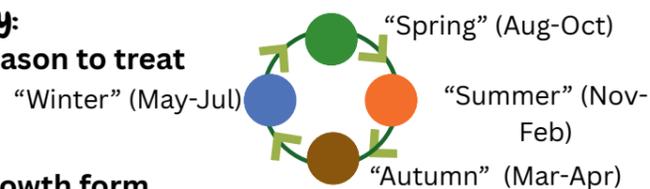
They identify a number of the most common weeds threatening biodiversity on the Nepean Peninsula and potential replacements for gardens and local nature strips, however they are not exhaustive.

The (Local) Replacements can be used to replace a number of weed species, and many can be pruned either low to the ground or into a taller screen/hedge.

Handy guides to more weeds and indigenous plants can be found in the brochures produced by the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council available on their website and at the Council Nursery. In particular, the *Guide to Indigenous Plants and Problem Weeds of the Nepean Peninsula* by Nepean Conservation Group Inc., Mornington Peninsula Shire and S.P.I.F.F.A.

Key:

Season to treat



Growth form



Foe (Exotic) Weed



Dolichos Pea *Dipogon lignosus*
Origin - S.Africa
Heart-shaped bright to mid green leaves.
Pink or white flower in Sept-Jan. Snow pea-like pods. Seeds late Spring/Early Summer. Reproduces by explosive seed pods, suckers, layering of runners.

Spread by: Soil containing seed or plant parts, dumped garden waste, possibly ants etc.
Note - Seeds may stay stored in soil for many years before germination. Cut stems may root, cut stumps may re-shoot.
Treatment: Pull up small plants. Larger plants cut n' paint with herbicide (April - Oct) or dig out.



Cape Ivy *Delairea odorata*
Origin - S. Africa
Ivy-shaped bright green leaves, smell when crushed. Yellow fragrant flowers lacking obvious "petals" mainly in Winter. Reproduces by rooting runners.

Spread by: Water, dumped garden waste or soil.
Treatment: **Caution: Broken stems and roots can re-shoot!**
Avoid pulling it off other vegetation as it breaks into pieces. Pull out shallow root system and hang on bushes to dry out and die.



Ivy Species (2 shown) *Hedera species*
Origin - Europe
Dark green leaves most common. Inconspicuous greenish flowers occurring Autumn/Winter. Berries dull blue to black mainly Spring. Reproduces by seed and rooting runners.

Spread by: Birds, foxes (probably), dumped garden waste.
Note - Seed is short-lived in soil. Cut stems can reshoot. Only flowers/seeds when elevated above ground on a plant/structure so this is first priority to treat.
Treatment: (Oct-May) Cut n'paint aerial branches/trunks and allow vine to die on tree to prevent going to seed. Then deal with ground spread by working from the new growth inwards. Hand remove seedlings.



Climbing Groundsel *Senecio angulatus*
Origin - S. Africa
Looks like Cape Ivy with bright green leaves but they are thick, stiff and waxy. Yellow daisy-like flowers in Winter. Stems often red/purple tinged. Reproduces by seed (long lived) and rooting stem parts.

Spread by: Wind, dumped garden waste, soil containing seed or plant parts. Stem and leaf fragments can sprout.
Caution - Don't confuse with local Climbing Lignum which has rounder leaves
Also, some of the non weedy local Senecios have yellow "daisy" like flowers too but they are not climbers!
Treatment: Hand pull seedlings. Larger plants cut n' paint trunk with herbicide.



Gazania Species *Gazania species*
Origin - S. Africa
Variable flower colours, often yellow to orange from Spring to Autumn. Leaves silver underneath. Reproduces by seed and rhizomes.

Spread by: Seeds in wind and water. Seed or plant parts in dumped garden waste or soil.
Treatment: Bag any seed heads. Dig out entire plant including underground stems (rhizomes). Place in bag and remove.



Blue Periwinkle *Vinca major*
Origin - Mediterranean
Forms large dense mats. Glossy mid-green or variegated leaves. Blue/mauve flowers with 5 petals from May to December. Reproduces by stem fragments rooting at nodes and seeds (which germinate rarely).

Spread by: Water, wind, dumped garden waste and soil containing seed or plant parts.
Treatment: Pull or dig up all year- make sure all roots removed. Water then solarise with black plastic or similar for 6 months from start of Summer. Repeat if necessary.



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Friends - Some Potential (Local) Replacements



(Also refer the Shrub/small tree suggestions overleaf for screening)



Small-Leaved Clematis *Clematis microphylla*
Prefers full sun to partial shade. Also *Hardenbergia violacea*



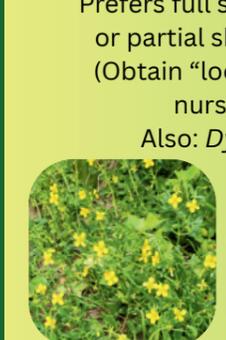
Climbing Lignum *Muehlenbeckia adpressa*
Prefers full sun to partial shade.



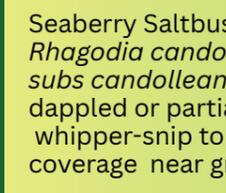
Bower Spinach *Tetragonia implexicoma*
Prefers full sun, part shade or dappled shade. Fragrant yellow flowers. Can be whipper snipped low to ground as a ground cover.



Coast Bone Fruit *Threlkeldia diffusa*
Prefers full Sun to dappled shade. Tolerates dry conditions well. Forms a carpet.



Coast Twin-leaf *Roepera billardiieri*
Prefers full Sun to partial shade. Forms a carpet.



Seaberry Saltbush *Rhagodia candolleana subs candolleana*
Prefers full Sun, dappled or partial shade. Prune or whipper-snip to create/maintain dense coverage near ground level or higher.



Small-flower Flax-lily *Dianella brevicaulis*
Blue flowers. Prefers full Sun to partial shade.



Coast/Grey Saltbush *Atriplex cinerea*
Prefers full Sun to partial shade.



Weed (Foe) Management

Correct Identification

Be absolutely sure the plant is a weed before taking it out/ treating it.

Context/Location

Think twice before digging as it can disturb roots of nearby plants or stimulate weed seed germination.

Weed roots can prevent erosion of our sandy unstable soil. If removing weeds on a slope, create small terraces with logs to help prevent erosion.

Gradual removal of weeds can help maintain shelter for wildlife.

Herbicide Use

Follow manufacturer's instructions.

Safety

- Wear eye protection, gloves, sturdy shoes, long sleeves, long pants.
- Concentrate when cutting.
- Follow herbicide product manufacturer's safety instructions.

Follow Up

Check for resprouting and new seedlings.

Disposal of Weed Material

Bag material for transport to Council if it has seeds on it or potential to re-root. Otherwise compost or chip.

Replacement Plantings (Friends) Management

Choosing Plants Appropriate to Location

New plantings on nature-strips should have regard to maintaining safe visibility for use of roads and footpaths.

Suggested plants require well-drained soil. Most of these require Sun for part of the day.

Sourcing Plants

Try and obtain indigenous plants from Peninsula nurseries that have "local provenance" (i.e. responsibly sourced from local seed or plants).

Establishment

Although water-wise, new plantings will require frequent watering initially, regular watering for a year then benefit from supplementary watering during hot dry periods.

Maintenance

Annual pruning after flowering will assist in obtaining the shape and density required.

Photo Credits: Sally Eldridge, Gidja Walker

References:

Environmental Weeds A Field Guide for SE Australia, Kate Blood, CRC Weed Management Systems 2001, *Noxious & Environmental Weeds & Plant Pathogens of the Mornington Peninsula* MPSC, L.Bester, M.Dell 2012

About Us: Blairgowrie Friends of Mornington Peninsula National Park

We are volunteers who work to improve conditions for the unique flora and fauna of the National Park and to increase understanding, appreciation and care for it.



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Foe (Exotic) Weed



Mediterranean Buckthorn *Rhamnus alaternus*
Evergreen shrub/tree. Dark green leaves with serrated edge. Small yellow-green fragrant flowers in clusters from Winter to Spring. Egg-shaped berries from red to black. Reproduces by seed & suckers.

Spread by: Seed spread by bird and animal poo and in dumped garden waste.

Treatment: Hand pull small ones or cut below the hook part of the root to prevent re-sprouting. Larger plants, cut and poison with herbicide on the perimeter of the cut stem. Start with female plants.

CAUTION - Don't confuse with Sea Box



Polygala/Myrtle leaved Milkwort *Polygala myrtifolia*
Origin - S. Africa
Evergreen shrub. Small light to mid-green leaves. Clusters of mauve pink flowers with white "beaks" mainly Aug-Dec.

Spread by:

Seed spread by water, ants, birds esp. Blackbirds, dumped garden waste, contaminated soil/equipment. Seeds are long-lived-8 yrs. One variety once thought sterile is able to seed.

Treatment:

Hand pull seedlings. Larger ones cut at base close to ground.

CAUTION - Don't confuse with Sea Box or Coast Beard Heath



Cotoneaster species *Cotoneaster species*
Origin - China
Evergreen or semi-evergreen shrub or tree. Small, dark green leaves, white hairs underneath. Clusters of small white flowers from Oct-Jan. Clusters of green turning red berries from Feb-Aug. Reproduces by seed.

Spread by:

Seed spread by birds, foxes and in dumped garden waste. Seed long-lived.

Treatment:

Hand pull small seedlings. Larger ones either:
-cut at base close to ground and paint with herbicide, or,
-drill n'fill with herbicide.



Sweet Pittosporum *Pittosporum undulatum*
Origin - Eastern Australia
Evergreen shrub or tree. Shiny, variegated or mid-dark green leaves, wavy margin. Clusters of cream flowers, scented, mainly Spring. Berries orange when ripe Autumn/Winter. Reproduces by seed & shoots from base.

Spread by:

Seed spread by birds, mammals including brushtails, foxes, rats, shoes, dumped garden waste and contaminated soil.

Treatment:

Hand pull very small ones or dig out. Larger ones cut at base close to ground and paint with herbicide. Concentrate first on female plants (produce berries).



Mirror Bush *Coprosma repens*
Origin - N.Z.
Evergreen shrub or tree. Shiny roundish mid-dark green leaves. Small greenish flowers in clusters Sept-Dec. Berries orange-red when ripe in Late Summer to Autumn. Reproduces by seed & rooting of lower branches (layering).

Spread by:

Seed spread by birds and animals, dumped garden waste and contaminated soil.

Treatment:

Hand pull or dig out very small ones. Cut n'paint stems of older plants with herbicide.



Common Privet *Ligustrum vulgare*
Deciduous/semi-deciduous. Smooth mid-green leaves. Sprigs of tiny white flowers in Spring. Berries black/blue when ripe Autumn/Winter. Some varieties green, white or yellow berries Reproduces by seed.

Spread by:

Seed spread by birds and animals and water. Dumped plant parts.

Treatment:

Hand pull or dig out very small ones. Cut n'paint stems of older plants with herbicide.



Method of Spread & Treatment

Friends - Some Potential (Local) Replacements Cont.

MOST OF THE LOCAL REPLACEMENTS CAN BE PRUNED INTO HEDGES OR DENSER SCREENS



Sea Box *Alyxia buxifolia*
Has smooth edged leaves, not serrated. Can be tall shrub. Prune to keep dense and low.



Coast Daisy Bush *Olearia axillaris*
Prefers full Sun/ Part Shade.



White Correa *Correa alba*
Attractive white flowers. Full Sun/Partial Shade.



Also: Thyme Rice Flower *Pimelea serpyllifolia* var. *serpyllifolia* Yellow flowers and *Correa reflexa* Green flowers



Coast Pomaderris *Pomaderris paniculosa*
Shiny leaves, coppery stems. Full Sun/Partial Shade.



Sticky Hop Bush *Dodonea viscosa*
Shiny bright green leaves. Full Sun/ Part Shade



Coast Beard Heath *Leucopogon parviflorus*
Honey scent. Full Sun/ Part Shade. Slow to establish.



Coast Wattle *Acacia longifolia* var. *sophorae*
Prefers Full Sun. A rather large plant. Can be pruned.



Common Boobialla *Myoporum insulare*
Covered in white flowers Fast growing. Keep pruned. Large plant. Full Sun to Part Shade.



Moonah *Melaleuca lanceolata*
Sun/Dappled & Part Shade. Large tree but can hedge smaller.



Drooping She Oak *Allocasuarina verticillata*
Large tree Doesn't hedge but provides an elevated screen and fallen needles suppress exotic weeds below.



Coast Banksia *Banksia integrifolia*
Full or Part Sun Often not successful on ridges. Tall tree, good screen.



Sweet Bursaria *Bursaria spinosa* var. *macrophylla* (has fewer spines than var. *spinosa*)
White flowers. Prefers Sun/Part Shade Responds well to pruning.

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