

## Invasive plants

The Black Saturday fires have left devastation on so many fronts, but regarding vegetation, many of the trees, understory and ground cover have now been replaced with an ash bed. Replanting your garden or establishing new windrows and shelterbelts will be part of the recovery process after these fires.

Whilst much vegetation has been removed leaving the soil prone to wind and water erosion, this ash bed provides an opportunity for indigenous plants to regrow from seeds stored in the soil. There will also be seeds from undesirable species such as invasive weeds. Many weeds produce thousands of seeds per plant. Once the soil is exposed, more weeds will re-invade, or existing seed banks in the soil will germinate and grow. Initially, as the competition for nutrients, space, light and moisture is low, the first plants to recolonise the ash bed are likely to be weeds. It maybe necessary to plant an area with species that will out-compete the weeds. Alternatively you may choose to allow the weed seeds to germinate, then knock down these weeds before replanting the site with appropriate species or allowing native regeneration.

*Below: Ilex aquifolium ~ Holly  
With attractive red berries birds can carry the seeds over long distances.*



*Above: Agapanthus praecox ssp. Orientalis on rural roadside*



*Above: Invasive seeds from Acer pseudoplatanus ~ Sycamore Maple have germinated within this Tree Fern.*

If any of the invasive species listed are already established in your garden please be aware of their potential to reproduce readily from either seed, vegetatively, rhizomous mats or possibly suckering. Be mindful of managing these species and be careful when disposing of prunings. For information on procedural methods to remove or treat weeds see list of websites within this publication. Management principles for weed control include:

- Contain the spread of weeds
- Reduce the level of infestation
- Work towards eradication
- Prevent reinfestation and/or new infestations
- Work with your neighbours

When planning your garden think carefully about the species you choose to plant and try to seek out alternatives to known noxious and environmental or invasive weeds. When planting think about drought tolerant species, or plants that do not require large amounts of water. If requiring soil and mulch to re-establish your garden, try to be conscious of where it may come from, it should be free of weed cuttings and seeds.

Try to seek indigenous varieties as these will be most suited to soil and weather conditions within your district and thus will have the best chance of success. Choose to support local business, but ensure the plants you purchase are suited to the purpose you require, keeping in mind that some species are extremely invasive and will 'Jump the Garden Fence'.

Refer to 'Grow What Where' which lists nearly 3,000 Australian native plants for every situation, special use and problem area (Grow What Where – Natalie Peate, Gwenda Macdonald and Alice Talbot, Blooming Books, Richmond, Victoria, 2008).

There is much local knowledge within the community, talk to elders and long term landholders, your nursery owners and officers from Local or State Government organisations. The internet also provides numerous sites to obtain further information.

Websites for more information:

Murrindindi Shire Council [www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Page/A-Z-Index.asp](http://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Page/A-Z-Index.asp) (Click on Weeds & Landcare)

Cooperative Research Centre for Australian Weed Management [www.weedsrc.org.au](http://www.weedsrc.org.au)

Department Primary Industries [www.dpi.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au) (Click on 'Agriculture' then Crops, pastures & weeds')

Department Sustainability & Environment [www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm) (Click on Plants & Animals then Pest Plant & Animals)

World Wildlife Fund [www.wwf.org.au/ourwork/invasives](http://www.wwf.org.au/ourwork/invasives) (Click on 'Escaped invasive garden plants' this takes you to 'Jumping the Garden Fence' Report)

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# Invasive Plants in the Shire of Murrindindi



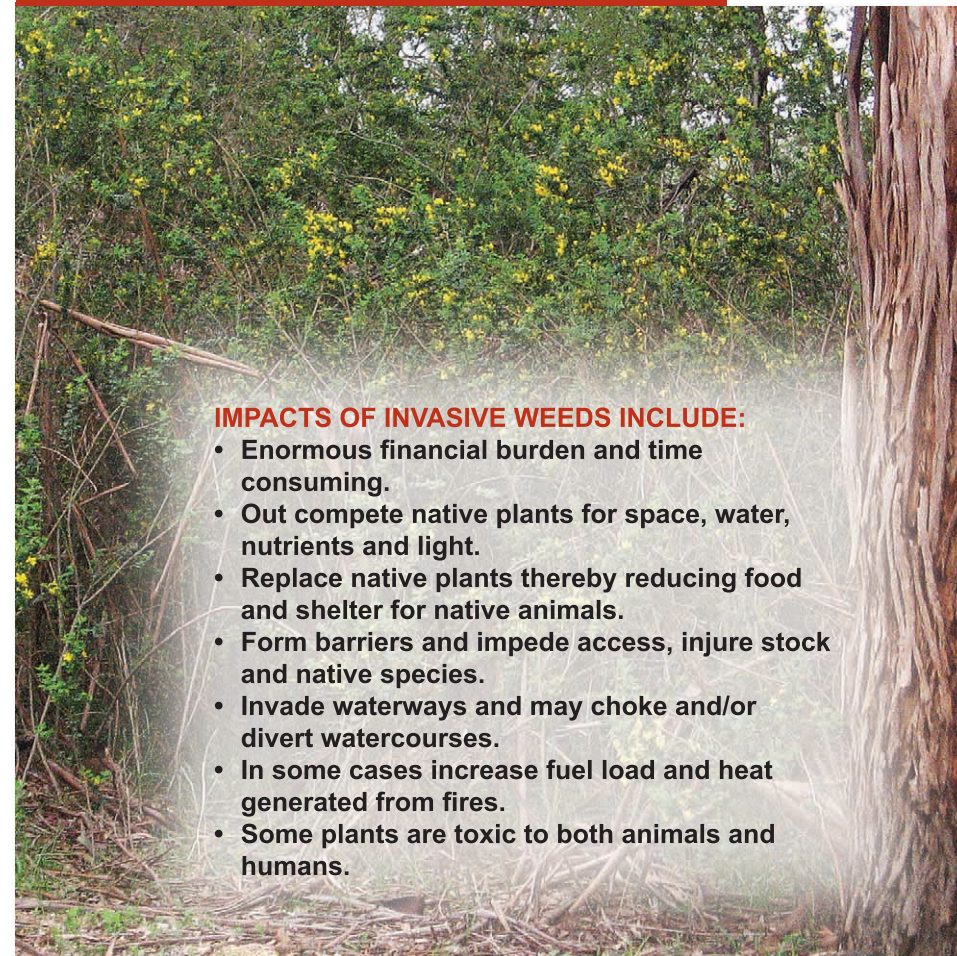
*This information sheet includes a list of plants that have been commonly grown in parks and gardens for colour, foliage, fruit, interesting form, shade and screening.*

*The plants listed become invasive and threaten the natural environment when 'jumping the garden fence', out-competing our native vegetation and depriving native animals of habitat and food sources.*

## Jumping the garden fence

More than 27,000 alien plant species have been introduced to Australia and of these 2,779 or 10% have now penetrated into the Australian environment. Of the 2,779 plants, 1,831 or 66% are garden escapees. A CSIRO report commissioned by The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) called 'Jumping the Garden Fence: Invasive garden plants in Australia and their environmental and agricultural impacts' found that 55% of these invasive garden plants are still available for sale and while 10% are declared noxious in one state they are still available for sale in other jurisdictions. Within agricultural systems weeds are estimated to generate costs of up to \$4 billion per year nationally. Many garden escapees contribute significantly to these costs, for example, efforts to control Paterson's Curse is estimated to cost approximately \$30 million per year nationally.

The full report can be downloaded from the WWF website [www.wwf.org.au](http://www.wwf.org.au)



### IMPACTS OF INVASIVE WEEDS INCLUDE:

- Enormous financial burden and time consuming.
- Out compete native plants for space, water, nutrients and light.
- Replace native plants thereby reducing food and shelter for native animals.
- Form barriers and impede access, injure stock and native species.
- Invade waterways and may choke and/or divert watercourses.
- In some cases increase fuel load and heat generated from fires.
- Some plants are toxic to both animals and humans.

## Top 16 most serious invasive garden plants in Victoria

African Love Grass,  
Asparagus Fern,  
Broom,  
Fountain Grass,  
Gazania,  
Glory Lily,  
Horsetails,  
Hybrid Mother of Millions,  
Japanese Honeysuckle,  
Mexican Feather Grass,  
Oxalis,  
Pepper Tree,  
Periwinkle,  
Prickly Pear,  
Spanish Heath,  
Sweet Pittosporum

Refer World Wildlife Fund  
'Jumping the Garden Fence: Invasive  
garden plants in Australia and their  
environmental and agricultural impacts'