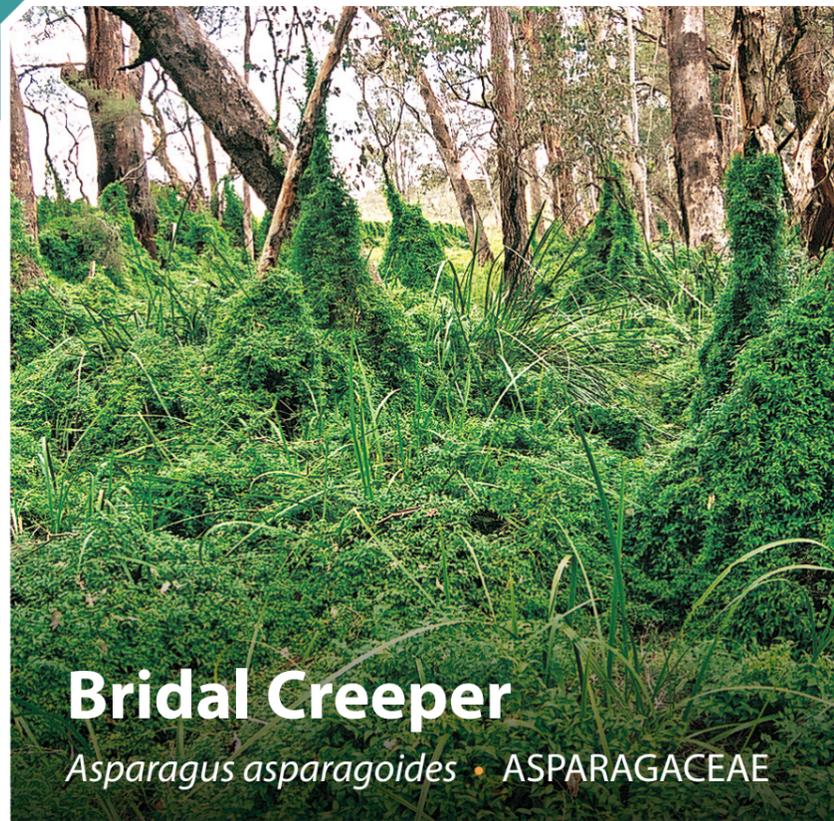


# APRIL



## Bridal Creeper

*Asparagus asparagoides* • ASPARAGACEAE



### DESCRIPTION

Bridal Creeper is a perennial climber with annually renewed, spineless stems sprawling aggressively for several metres and climbing quite high into trees. It has shiny egg-shaped to heart-shaped 'leaves' 1-7 cm long and 4-30 mm wide.

The flowers are white and bisexual, with petals that are 5 mm long. Each flower has 6 stamens with orange to red anthers. The berries are globular, red to purple when ripe and 6-10 mm across. The rootstock is tuberous and extensive. Bridal Creeper flowers in spring, dies back over summer and then shoots away in autumn. The bright berries are quickly spread by birds and readily establish under trees and roosts.

Native to South Africa, Bridal Creeper is an extremely invasive environmental weed. A variant with somewhat larger 'leaves' which have a waxy appearance and larger tubers forming a rosette has been found in South Australia and Victoria. This variant is resistant to the rust fungus which has provided control of the common variety in most areas. Plants that are rust free should be properly identified.

### CONTROL

Manual control is very difficult. Introduce and encourage biocontrol agents especially the Bridal Creeper rust if it is not obvious by late winter (collect leaves with rust pustules from an infected site and rub them into the 'clean' Bridal Creeper as soon as possible).

Very low rates of 2 g/ha metsulfuron(600g/kg) plus Pulse® can be applied with a mister or 0.02 g metsulfuron plus 25 mL Pulse® per 10 L water provides good suppression with a hand spray in winter with little damage to the native bush. No effect is seen until the following season when only a few stems emerge. Retreat or manually remove these stems and burn the tubers and root system.

Applying a mix of 1 L glyphosate(450g/L) plus 2 L water to leaves and stems with a sponge glove or brush, taking care to avoid other species, is slower but may be more selective. Grazing or persistent removal of the tops for several years exhausts the tubers. Concentrate on reducing the vertical growth because this is where most seed is set. Mulching encourages seed to germinate.

Intense fire can kill some tubers and clear the area to allow spraying before other species germinate or reshoot. Burial is not usually effective. Replant shrub species.



## Wireweed

*Polygonum aviculare* • POLYGONACEAE



### DESCRIPTION

Wireweed is a ground-hugging or sprawling herb with oval leaves usually 5-12 mm long. At the base of each leaf is a white to silvery sheath around the stem. In the leaf axils there are small clusters of pink-tinged flowers 2-3 mm long. Each flower is 5-lobed and has 7 or 8 stamens and 3 styles. The fruits are small, 3-angled and enclosed in the withered flower.

Native to Europe, Wireweed is a common weed of pastures, roadsides and waste land. Flowering occurs in autumn and spring.

### CONTROL

Cultivate before flowering. Manual removal is usually difficult because plants tend to grow in heavy soil and break off at the base and regrow. Use a weed fork to extract the taproot if removing manually. In bushland areas, wipe actively growing plants with a mixture of 1 L glyphosate(450g/L) plus 2 L water.

For small areas, apply a mixture of 0.2 g metsulfuron(600g/kg) plus 100 mL Tordon®75-D to actively growing plants before flowering in spring or summer depending on when the Wireweed has germinated.

On larger areas, Spinnaker® at 1 L/ha, or 20 mL per 10 L water for hand spraying, will provide reasonably selective control of small actively growing Wireweed and control seedlings for about a year. 5-10 g/ha of metsulfuron(600g/kg) or 0.2 g plus 25 mL wetting agent in 10 L water also provides good control. Inspect 3 times a year for several years.

For broadacre spraying before transplanting trees, 1 L/ha glyphosate plus 600 mL/ha 2,4-D ester(680g/L) plus 1 kg/ha simazine(900g/kg) plus 1 L/ha Dual®Gold plus 1% spray oil will control seedlings in spring and reduce summer establishments.