

Black Range Invasive Plant Impact Assessment/Prioritisation Table (April 2022); Reference:- Victoria's Resources Online, Weed Impact Assessment Tables
 This assessment based on the impact of invasive plants on biodiversity within the Black Range.

Invasive Plant Species	Value Impacted	Relevant Local Information / Comments, ie: Current and Potential Distribution and Invasiveness	Ranking - VRO	Priority for Action
Boneseed (<i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera</i>)	Impact on habitat composition	Dense stands eliminate most indigenous ground flora and prevent virtually all overstorey regeneration. Displaces species across all strata with major impact on ground flora. Infestation over approx. 200+ hectares established in Black Range since 2006 and 2014 wildfires. Due to Boneseed's current distribution, the significant seedbank in the Black Range and its highly dispersible/invasive nature. Boneseed is a significant threat for rapid invasion and very high impact on the Black Range ecosystem. This current situation elevates Boneseed as the number one priority for control above all other current invasive plants in the Black Range (H*). High external invasion pressure. Birds are a major agent of spread because they readily eat the fleshy fruit and either pass or regurgitate the seed in viable condition. So to do feral goats, feral deer, foxes and rabbits. (<i>Parsons.W, Cuthbertson. E, Noxious Weeds of Australia CSIRO 2001</i>). There is evidence of widespread browsing by these animals on the Black Range infestation.	MH (H*)	1
	Impact on habitat structure	Dense stands eliminate most indigenous ground flora and prevent virtually all overstorey regeneration. Displaces species across all strata with major impact on ground flora. In some areas of the NSW coast it now forms almost pure stands.	MH	
	Effect on threatened flora	Can threaten rare or threatened native plant species. Very high threat to locally threatened plant species in Black Range.	H	
	Effect on threatened fauna	BRLMG Assessment. As above, plus – reduces habitat for threatened species, leading to reduction in local numbers of individuals, OR maybe local extinctions.	MH*	
	Effect on non-threatened fauna	Dense stands destroy or drastically alter the habitat of native birds and animals. In NSW it has replaced plant species known to be important food sources for migratory birds.	MH	
	Food source to pests	Rabbits, foxes, native and introduced birds, and suspect feral goats and deer.	H	
	Provides pest harbour		H	
	Damage to cultural sites		MH	

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	Restricts human access	Shrub 1-3 metres high and wide. It is highly invasive in many ecosystems including coastal dunes, and can dominate vegetation. Dense stands can restrict recreational activities.	H	
	Changes fire regime		L	
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Bridal Creeper <i>(Myrsiphyllum asparagoides)</i>	Impact on habitat composition	It smothers pre-existing vegetation and prevents other plants from growing. Monoculture within specific layers; displaces all species within a strata/layer. Significant infestations of Bridal Creeper were treated and successfully reduced in the 1990's - early 2000's in the Black Range. Although the impacts on biodiversity have been significantly reduced, Bridal Creeper is still distributed across the Black Range (4200 Ha) due to the ongoing dispersal mainly by birds. Ongoing vigilance for annual surveillance and treatment of isolated infestations is still required in order to prevent rapid spread and impact. High external invasion pressure.	H	2
	Impact on habitat structure	It smothers pre-existing vegetation and prevents other plants from growing. The tubers act as a barrier to impede the root growth of other plants, and often prevents their seedling establishment. Monoculture within a specific layers; displaces all spp. Within a strata/layer.	H	
	Effect on threatened flora	Often results in smothering of all flora in its way, any floral VROT species in its way also may be smothered, resulting in localised reductions in populations that may be significant.	H	
	Effect on threatened fauna	As above, plus – reduces habitat for threatened species, leading to reduction in local numbers of individuals, OR maybe local extinctions.	MH	
	Effect on non-threatened fauna	As above.	MH	
	Food source to pests	Food source of both native and introduced birds.	H	
	Provides pest harbour	BRLMG Assessment:- observed providing harbour to rabbits, foxes and suspect feral cats.	MH*	
	Damage to cultural sites	Can smother, middens, scar trees and other sites of significance	H	
	Restricts human access		ML	
	Change fire regime		ML	

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St Johns Wort <i>(Hypericum perforatum)</i>	Impact on habitat composition	St Johns Wort forms extensive infestations excluding most other ground flora and seriously impeding overstorey recruitment. Major displacement of some species within different strata. Due to current distribution (400 hectares), density and potential distribution and invasiveness, St Johns Wort is elevated above other invasive plants such as One-Leaf Cape Tulip, Gorse and Blackberry. One-Leaf Cape Tulip current distribution, mainly on fully modified agricultural land and minimal imminent threat to biodiversity.	MH	3
	Impact on habitat structure	As above. Major effect on 20% of floral strata. Minor effect on shrubs.	ML	
	Effect on threatened flora	As above. BRLMG Assessment	MH*	
	Effect on threatened fauna	It is invasive in various native habitats, including grasslands, grassy woodlands and forests.		
	Effect on non-threatened fauna	As above. St Johns Wort contains hypericin, which causes photosensitisation in any mammals that ingest it resulting in blisters on weakly pigmented parts of the skin. The plant is poisonous to animals affecting the central nervous system, which can lead to loss of condition and eventually death.	M	
	Food Source to pests		L	
	Provides pest harbour		L	
	Damage to cultural sites		ML	
	Restricts human access		L	
	Change fire regime	In late summer, the dry stems constitute a fire hazard in forest areas. Moderate increase in the frequency of fire risk.	ML	

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Blackberry (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg)	Impact on habitat composition	Blackberry can completely dominate the vegetation of an area in a very short time. Regeneration of native plants is seriously impeded. The impacts of climate change, such as reduced reliable annual rainfall has been observed to impede the invasiveness of Blackberry in the Black Range in recent years. Still, Blackberry has and is occurring in a limited number of moist soaks within gullies and drainage lines where important habitat niches/refuges occur for significant local native flora and fauna. Ie: recently thought extinct from the Black Range – Southern Brown Bandicoot. These impacts on high environmental values elevate Blackberry as a priority for action above some other invasive plant species.	H	4
	Impact on habitat structure	Blackberry covers large areas with a dense canopy excluding light from the soil surface. Few other plants can compete and Blackberry completely dominates the vegetation of an area in a very short time. Regeneration of native plants is seriously impeded, resulting in a monoculture.	H	
	Effect on threatened flora	Threatens rare or threatened native plant species	H	
	Effect on threatened fauna	BRLMG Assessment* Because of its spreading habitat, dominant nature, and spiny canes, it reduces habitat/native flora and food source for native fauna. It also exposes native fauna to increased risk of predation, due to its harbouring feral pest animals such as rabbit, foxes and feral cats.	H*	
	Effect on non-threatened fauna	Because of its spreading habitat, dominant nature, and spiny canes, it reduces habitat for native fauna. It also exposes native fauna to increased risk of predation, due to its harbouring feral pest animals such as rabbit, foxes and feral cats,	MH	
	Food source to pests	The berries are a food source for foxes, feral goats, feral deer and the introduced starling and blackbird.	MH	
	Provides pest harbour	It provides harbour for rabbits, foxes, feral cats.	H	
	Damage to cultural sites	Potential visual impact or restricted access.	ML	

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	Restricts human access	Blackberry forms dense, impenetrable thickets, often along watercourses. Presents a major impediment to both human and vehicular traffic.	H	
	Change to fire regime	As much as 70% of the mass of the clump may consist of dead canes, and large clumps are a considerable fire hazard.	MH	

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Gorse (<i>Ulex europeaus</i>)	Impact on habitat composition	Fixes nitrogen. Excludes all other indigenous vegetation and prevents any regeneration occurring. Major effect on species within low to mid strata. Although currently recorded at only six locations, VRO Invasiveness Assessment has ranked Dispersal = High, Number of propagules (seeds) produced = High, Seed Longevity 25 years> = high, Invades undisturbed ecosystems = High. Current area Gorse is distributed over in Black Range = estimated 25 ha. Current minimal distribution of gorse, and dispersal potential relegates its priority for action compared to other invasive plants above it.	H	5
	Impact on habitat structure	Forms dense impenetrable thickets that eventually excludes all other indigenous vegetation and prevents any regeneration from occurring.	H	
	Effect on threatened flora	BRLMG Assessment* :- Can threaten rare and threatened native plants. None currently known to be threatened in Black Range.	MH*	
	Effect on threatened fauna	BRLMG Assessment* :- Gorse has and is occurring in a limited number of sites (six). It should be noted that in the past, the recently thought extinct SBB has utilised a gorse infestation in the Black Range as habitat. Therefore, gorse control planning should take this local knowledge into account.	MH*	
	Effect on non-threatened fauna	It eliminates native forage plants reducing food source for native fauna and restricts access. Animals eat seedlings and young shoots, but mature plants are rarely eaten. Overall reduction in habitat of native fauna.	MH*	
	Food source to pests	Birds and ants spread seeds.	ML	
	Provides pest harbour	Dense gorse growth provides excellent harbour for rabbits.	H	
	Damage to cultural sites	An erect much-branched shrub to 3 metres that can form dense thickets. The root system is not vigorous and thus not likely to cause structural damage. The plant would have a moderate visual impact.	ML	

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African Weed Orchid <i>(Disa bracteata)</i>	Impact on habitat composition	Competes and excludes smaller indigenous flora including orchids, lilies and grasses. Major displacement of some dominant species in lower strata. African Weed Orchid is becoming widely distributed across the Black Range. Known distribution is likely estimated to be between across 600 – 1000 ha of the Black Range, but is likely more. VRO Invasiveness Assessment Tables identifies this plant as 'Highly' dispersible. Known to be both wind and water dispersed and likely to be introduced accidentally on vehicles and machinery ie:(2006 & 2014 wildfires in Black Range), spread by seeds which are minute dust like and maybe blown many km. Each plant produces tens of thousands of airborne seeds. Due to difficulty in controlling and preventing dispersal, suggest priority for control is to mitigate imminent threat to identified high value ground flora asset sites.	MH	6
	Impact on habitat structure	Competes and excludes smaller indigenous flora including orchids, lilies and grasses. Likely to have a major effect on the lower strata.	MH	
	Effect on threatened flora	In Victoria, <i>D. bracteata</i> has been found in several locations including the Victorian Volcanic Plains, where threatened flora such as basalt greenhood and tough scurf pea exist (DPI 2003).	H	
	Effect on threatened fauna	The species is not documented as posing an additional risk to threatened fauna.	MH	
	Effect on non-threatened fauna	As above.	L	
	Food source to pests		L	
	Provides pest harbour		L	
	Damage to cultural sites		L	
	Restricts human access		L	
	Change fire regime		L	

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One Leaf Cape Tulip <i>(Morarea flaccida)</i>	Impact on habitat composition	Severely impedes the growth and regeneration of indigenous ground flora. Currently distributed across estimated 100 Ha, of mainly agricultural land systems in and around Black Range. Potential for further spread into riparian zones of the upper Wimmera River catchment, being Donald Creek into Concongella Creek, as well as into' Pleasant Creek. Although currently occurring at sites that provide high public visibility, due to characteristics of dispersal, low/medium imminent risk of spread into native woodland ecosystem of upper Black Range a lower priority for action is appropriate compared to some other invasive plants.	MH	7
	Impact on structure	It competes with and replaces desirable plants in pastures, but does not establish well in shaded sites. Severely impedes the growth and regeneration of indigenous ground flora.	ML	
	Effect on threatened flora	Can threaten rare or threatened native plants	H	
	Effect on threatened fauna			
	Effect on non-threatened fauna	Displaces desirable plants reducing food availability. Reduces carrying capacity. Although is limited in natural ecosystems, it is present in medium to large populations where it does infest. Cape Tulip is poisonous to all grazing animals (? Macropods). Death can occur within about three days of exposure.	MH	
	Food source to pests	Potential for birds (including introduced species) to use corms as a source of food.	ML	
	Provides pest harbour		L	
	Damage to cultural sites	Dense infestation could present a moderate negative visual effect if occurring in cultural sites	ML	
	Restricts human access		L	
	Change fire regime		L	

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Paterson's Curse <i>Echium plantagineum</i>	Impact on habitat composition	Paterson's curse can form very extensive, persistent populations in disturbed areas, competing vigorously with smaller indigenous plants and impeding overstorey regeneration. Major impact on lower stratum, minor impact on mid strata. Estimate of current known distribution of Paterson's curse in and around Black Range = 300ha at 6 sites. High dispersal characteristics and a serious weed of dry sclerophyll forests, woodland and riparian vegetation. The current relatively large area of distribution and dispersal characteristics elevate Paterson's curse priority for action above the invasive plants below.	MH	8
	Impact on habitat structure	Paterson's curse can form very extensive, persistent populations in disturbed areas, competing vigorously with smaller indigenous plants and impeding overstorey regeneration.	MH	
	Effect on threatened flora			
	Effect on threatened fauna			
	Effect on non-threatened fauna	Changes to structure may limit suitable fodder for non-threatened fauna.	ML	
	Food source to pests		ML	
	Provides pest harbour		L	
	Damage to cultural sites		ML	
	Restricts human access		L	
	Change fire regime		L	

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Wild Watsonia (<i>Watsonia meriana</i> var. <i>bulbillifera</i>)	Impact on habitat composition	A highly invasive species. Dominates ground flora and prevents most overstorey regeneration. Tolerates sun, semi shade, moist conditions, flooding for several weeks and most soil types. Major displacement of species in lower and mid strata. One major infestation and five minor infestations previously recorded in Black Range. Major infestation distributed over approx. 2 ha, high potential for spread down Donald Creek riparian zone. Currently limited area of impact on Black Range native woodland.	MH	9
	Impact on habitat structure	Bulbil Watsonia forms dense stands that dominate the ground-layer and prevent most overstorey regeneration occurring. Infestations would have a major impact on ground flora and affect mid-storey species.	ML	
	Effect on threatened flora	Can threaten rare or threatened native plant species. Not known to currently threaten rare and threatened species in Black Range.	H	
	Effect on threatened fauna			
	Effect on non-threatened fauna		MH	
	Food source to pests		L	
	Provides pest harbour		L	
	Damage to cultural sites		ML	
	Restricts human access		ML	
	Change fire regime		ML	

