

# Carrion flower (*Orbea variegata*)

## Fact sheet

### What do they look like?

Carrion flower is a low lying ground cover succulent. Individual plants can cover a small area under a shrub or up to 5m<sup>2</sup>. Each plant is a conglomeration of multiple spineless fleshy 'fingers' approximately 10cm high with coarse nodules up multiple sides. The fingers can range from purple to green, with unhealthy plants yellowing when under stress.

The plant produces large banana shape pods containing thousands of seeds. These seeds are covered in fine, long, silky hairs that allow them to be spread by wind. The seed hairs get caught at the base of shrubs, ready for germination. Seed viability is thought to be low in Australia.

The attractive foul smelling 5-8cm yellow and purple spotted flower has five points with a round centre and a felt finish.

### Why should carrion flower be controlled?

Carrion flower is native to Southern Africa and was brought to Australia as an ornamental and 'fly attracter' plant but has become an environmental weed in Queensland, north-eastern New South Wales and arid parts of South Australia around Port Augusta and Whyalla.

Carrion flower poses a threat to arid regions. It invades chenopod shrublands (bluebush and saltbush). It is associated with the decline and death of shrubs and exclusion of ground layer herbs and grasses. It spreads efficiently by



wind borne seed and vegetatively via stem fragments moved by people, machinery, animals or water. Carrion flower tends to establish under existing trees and shrubs. It reduces the water availability to the native plant as well as reducing that plant's biomass and the seed bank in the area. It is well adapted to drought and will survive most conditions.

### What are my responsibilities?

Carrion flower is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*. This means that it is illegal to transport and sell this plant in South Australia and landholders in the landscape board areas of Alinytjara Wilurara and Eyre Peninsula have a responsibility to control it. Residents who rent their properties also have obligations to control any weeds present. This also includes anyone who is leasing property unless other arrangements have been made.



## What are the best ways to control Carrion flower?

### Mechanical control

Manual removal seems initially successful, but after time plants reappear suggesting regrowth has occurred from roots left in the soil. Follow up control of the plant is crucial to ensure no regrowth has occurred.

### Chemical control

The most successful control identified has been the brush-on application of a glyphosate based chemical. It appears the aggravation on the skin allows for a quick and successful uptake of the poison. You should control the plant between the months of July and October.

Brush on glyphosate (450g/L) at an application rate of 100ml in 10L of water. Add a wetter and spray oil to this mix.

Apply the chemical by brush or weed wand to all parts of the plant.

You can also spot spray the plant with glyphosate (450g/L) at an application rate of 100ml in 10L of water. Add a wetter and spray oil to this mix.

It is essential to saturate all parts of the plant.



## Do you have Carrion flower?

If you think you have Carrion flower on your property, Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board staff can provide advice on control and management.

### More information

Email: [ep.landscapeboard@sa.gov.au](mailto:ep.landscapeboard@sa.gov.au)

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