

Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board

PEST SPECIES REGIONAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

White Weeping Broom

Retama raetam

This plan has a five year life period and will be reviewed in 2027.



INTRODUCTION

Synonym(s)

Retama raetam Webb & Berthel., *Hist. Nat. Îles Canaries* 2: 56. 1842

Nomenclatural synonyms: *Genista raetam* Forssk., *Fl. Aegypt.-Arab.* 214. 1775

Lygos raetam (Forssk.) Heyw., *Feddes Repert.* 79: 53. 1968

Taxonomic synonym: *Retama duriaei* (Spach) Webb, *Ann. Sci. Nat., Bot., sér. 2*, 20: 279 1843

Biology

It is a shrub that grows to about 3m tall and may reach 6m across. Plants are grey-green with slender, drooping branches.

Young plants are wispy with a single stem and strong taproot. The leaves which are very small and narrow (about 5 mm long and 1mm wide), are quickly dropped and the plant remains leafless for most of the year. Flowers are 8–10 mm long, white and pea-like, appearing close to the stems in clusters of 3–15.

White weeping broom reproduces from seed. The hairless grape-shaped seed pod (10–15 mm diameter) contains one or two kidney-shaped seeds (6.5 mm long) which may be yellow, green, brown or black in colour.

Stems of young plants are covered with long soft hairs but become hairless with age. Each plant produces hundreds of seed pods and up to thousands of seeds. The seeds drop when the seed pods split open, and can be spread by water. A hard seed coat renders most seeds dormant initially, but as the seed coat wears away germination can take place. Seeds remain viable in the soil for several years.

Origin

White weeping broom was brought to Australia from the Mediterranean as an ornamental shrub. It was first recorded in South Australia in 1841.

Distribution

It invades nutrient-poor to fertile, well-drained soils where it has an advantage as a nitrogen-fixing species. White weeping broom has a high tolerance to drought and frost, moderate fire and salt tolerance, but low tolerance to waterlogging.



Figure1: Distribution of White Weeping Broom in Australia.

Source: <https://profiles.ala.org.au/opus/weeds-australia/profile/Retama%20raetam>

It could grow in most coastal shrublands and woodlands on sandy soils, and some similar habitats inland in the southern part of South Australia. White weeping broom is scattered at coastal sites from Streaky Bay to Mount Gambier and also around some towns in the agricultural zone as far north as Peterborough. Its distribution is discontinuous, depending on where they have been planted.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Pest Risk

White weeping broom reproduces from seed. Each plant produces hundreds of seed pods and up to thousands of seeds on larger plants. The seeds drop close to the parent when the seed pods split open, but can be spread short distances by rainwater running off. Seed may be eaten by animals including rabbits and hares, and germinate after being passed some distance away.

White weeping broom competes with native shrubs in coastal vegetation, mallee and some other vegetation types including grasslands. It is unpalatable to grazing stock.

Feasibility of Control

No herbicides are registered for control of white weeping broom. In the case of other exotic brooms, chemical control is effective in the short term but is expensive and needs to be followed up for many years until the seed bank has been depleted. With any herbicide use there is also a risk of damage to non-target species.

Physical removal is an option for isolated plants, especially if they have not seeded. Seedlings may be hand pulled or cut and the stumps poisoned or dug out. However, bulldozing can cause massive soil disturbance and consequent dispersal of seeds. Fire effectively kills white weeping broom and can help to break seed dormancy. Experience using fire to control other species of broom indicates that it kills a large proportion of seeds but lightly scorched plants may re-sprout. Follow-up chemical treatment after fire will probably be needed for many years until the seed bank is depleted.

Status

Within the EP Landscape region a risk management assessment [3] (Table 1) shows *white weeping broom* merits an eradicate management action in the Southern Perennial Pasture landuse.

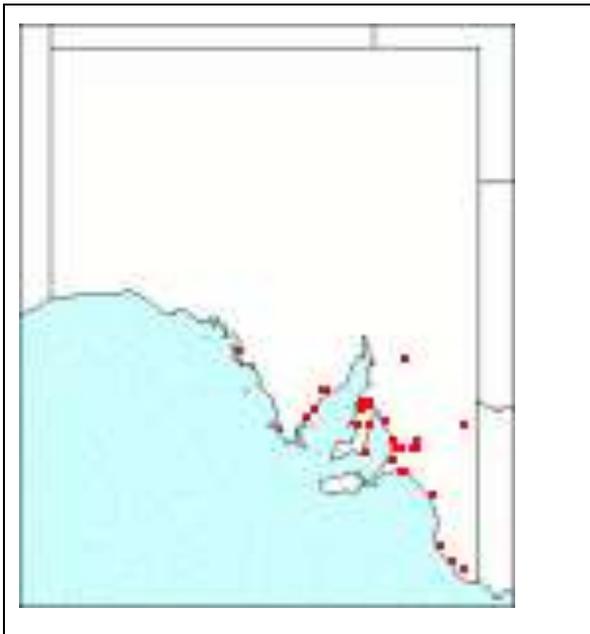


Figure 1: SA Distribution Map based on current data relating to specimens held in the State Herbarium of South Australia.

On Eyre Peninsula there is a limited known distribution.

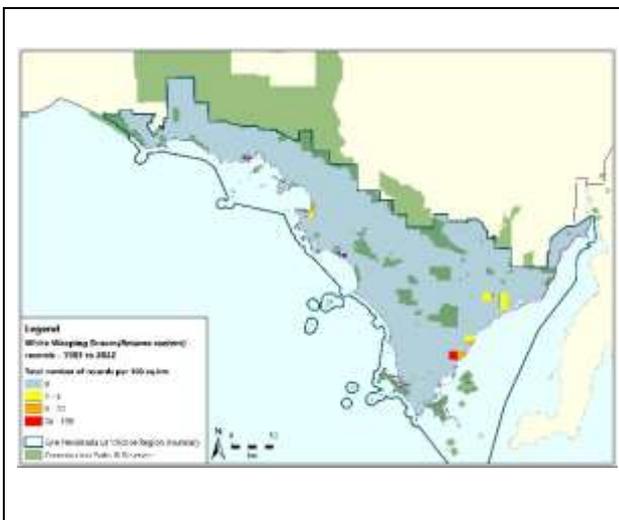


Figure 3: Distribution of *Retama raetam* on Eyre Peninsula using BDBSA data, ALA data and EPLB control data.

Table 1: Regional Assessment Table

Land Use	Pest Risk	Feasibility of Containment	Management Action
Southern Perennial Pasture	Very high	Very high	Eradicate

REGIONAL RESPONSE

Special Considerations / Board Position

N/A

Outcomes

To prevent the establishment of new white weeping broom infestations and eradicate existing infestations.

Objectives

To:

- Refine the mapping of white weeping broom infestations;
- Destroy all existing infestations;
- Prevent new infestations establishing; and
- Gain cooperation of stakeholders and other agencies to improve control.

Area/s to be protected

All areas

Actions

Land managers to:

1. survey and control all infestations annually and supply survey and control information on request to Landscape Board staff;
2. prevent the spread of white weeping broom by searching annually for outlier infestations near known infestations; and
3. monitor areas of previous control works and undertake follow-up control works as required.

Landscape Board staff to:

4. facilitate, encourage, compel (develop action plans) control on private land;

5. facilitate, encourage, compel or undertake control on public land, including roadsides (costs may be recovered from landmanagers);
6. Develop localised annual action plans to achieve the objectives and actions of this management plan;
7. undertake systematic data collection (control and survey numbers, location and date information) and storage in a central spatial database;
8. provide education on control methods and encourage wider control;
9. Identify modes of potential spread and promote the benefits of good hygiene practices;
10. facilitate cooperative action with land managers, neighbouring Landscape regions and other agencies; and
11. keep abreast of trials, including bio-agents, to determine more effective means of control.

Evaluation

Evaluation of success will be based on:

- annual analysis in November of monitoring and control data to evaluate the success of pest plan actions (including the update of spatial layers);
- identify any gaps in delivery and action as soon as possible; and
- review of this pest management plan every five years.

More information

Contact your local Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board office

www.landscape.gov.au/ep/contact-us

Ph: 8688 3200

E: EPLBAdmin@sa.gov.au

Declarations

In South Australia white weeping broom is declared in category 3 – Provisions: 186 (1), 186 (2), 188 (1),

188 (2), 192 (2) and 194 for the Eyre Peninsula under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* (.

Table 2). The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board may require land owners to control white weeping broom plants growing on their land. The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board is also required to control plants on road reserves, and may recover costs from the adjoining land owners. Any permit to allow its entry, road transport or sale can only be issued by the regional landscape board pursuant to section 197.

Table 2: Relevant sections of the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*. Provisions for the Eyre Peninsula region for white weeping broom.

Section	How the section applies
Provision for Eyre Peninsula	
186(1)	Prohibiting entry to area
186(2)	Prohibiting movement on public roads
188(1)	Prohibiting sale of the plant
188(2)	Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods
192(2)	Land owners to control the plant on their properties
194	Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves

References

1. Australian Weed CRC (2003), Alert List for Environmental Weeds - Australian Weed Management Guide – White weeping broom (*Retama raetam*).
2. Lamp, C & Collet, F. (2002). A Field, Guide to Weeds in Australia. Inkata Press, Melbourne.
3. Virtue, J.G., 2008, SA Weed Risk Management Guide February 2008. Adelaide: Department of Water Land and Biodiversity Conservation - South Australia. 22.