

# Salvation Jane (*Echium plantagineum*)



Salvation Jane is an annual winter weed of pastures that poses a particular poisoning threat to horses.

It is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*.

## Description

Salvation Jane is an annual herb that grows from a sturdy taproot. Leaves are produced in autumn and winter in a flat-lying rosette. The leaves are light-green, hairy and egg-shaped, growing up to 30 cm long. The leaves have distinct, branched veins.

Flowering stems are produced in late winter from the centre of the rosette. The stems are unbranched, hairy and normally reach a height of 60 cm. The stem leaves are smaller and narrower than the rosette leaves.

The stems develop flowers from September to December. The flowers are trumpet-like and mostly purple, but occasionally white, blue and pink. Up to four seeds develop from each flower.

Plants normally die in summer.

Individual plants can produce more than 5000 seeds per year, which accumulates in the soil to form a large seedbank. Seeds may remain dormant in the soil for up to 5 years.

Salvation Jane is valuable to the honey industry, providing an early source of pollen.

## Impacts

Salvation Jane is a significant pasture weed. The plant's early winter growth allows it to out-compete pasture seedlings. The large, flat rosettes smother adjacent plants it can become the dominant species in pastures.

The plant produces poisonous alkaloids that affect livestock, particularly horses and pigs. After feeding on Salvation Jane for a period of weeks, animals lose condition resulting in serious health issues.

Salvation Jane can contribute to soil erosion by suppressing perennial grasses in spring. When it dies off in summer, bare soil is exposed.

In autumn, seedlings may be so dense that they completely dominate other species.

Salvation Jane may be eaten by stock when young, but when abundant it reduces the overall quality and quantity of useful fodder.

It is also a source of hayfever and allergies in humans. Some people are allergic to the pollen. The hairy texture of the leaves and stems can cause skin irritation.

Salvation Jane can impact on native vegetation, particularly in disturbed areas where it suppresses the growth and recovery of native species.

## Current distribution

Salvation Jane was introduced to Australia from Europe as an ornamental garden plant.

It is present throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges region and grows on a wide range of soils.

Salvation Jane reproduces by seed. It is commonly spread via contaminated hay and grain, livestock droppings and machinery. Birds also spread seed.

Some seeds remain dormant in the soil for many years and cultivation appears to stimulate germination. Mowing or grazing the flowering plants encourages new shoots that will flower out of season.

## Control methods

Biological control agents (biocontrols) have been very successful in reducing the abundance of Salvation Jane.

However the weed remains widespread and ongoing monitoring is required to confirm that biocontrol's are still present in the landscape. For advice on chemical control techniques contact your nearest Landscape Board. Please refer to the Weed control handbook for declared plants in South Australia for advice on chemical control. You can find it on Biosecurity SA's website at [www.pir.sa.gov.au](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au)

## Declarations

Salvation Jane is a declared weed under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*.

- 186(2) Cannot transport the plant or anything carrying it
- 188(1) Cannot sell the plant
- 188(2) Cannot sell any produce / goods carrying the plant
- 192(2) Landowner must control the plant on their land
- 194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves

## More information

Please contact Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu for further information, advice and assistance in controlling Salvation Jane.



## Further information

Further information is available through Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu

**Mount Barker Office:** Cnr Mann & Walker streets, Mount Barker, 5251 (08) 8391 7500

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



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