

Weed Warriors of our Waterways

Eradicating aquatic weeds from the River Murray, wetlands and floodplains

Weed Warriors of our Waterways is a 3 year, \$800,000 project aimed at eradicating priority pests to protect the sustainability of the Murray River and its wetlands and floodplains.

Weed Warriors

The South Australian stretch of the River Murray is the target of a new project to control invasive weed species with the aim of protecting ecological health.

Funded through the Landscape Priority Fund, Weed Warriors will engage district staff from the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board to work with local councils, National Parks and Wildlife Service, First Nations organisations and community and landholder groups to tackle 6 priority weed species – terrestrial and aquatic - that are a risk to ecological health.

Project location

The project area incorporates approximately 560 kilometres of South Australian River Murray, from the Victorian border to Wellington, as well as the wetlands, creeks and tributaries that feed into the broader river system. These project locations include Ramsar wetlands of international significance, floodplains, environmental watering sites, priority recreational river banks and areas used for irrigation purposes.

Priority species

The project will control 6 priority species:

- *Nymphaea mexicana* (yellow water lily)
- *Sagittaria platyphylla* (arrow head or Sagittaria)
- Cacti species
- *Lycium ferocissimum* (African boxthorn)
- *Chysanthemoides monilifera* (boneseed)
- *Cuscuta campestris* (golden dodder) and host.

Weed control will be undertaken in a coordinated and targeted approach across the region and may include other declared species found, and best-practise methods will be used when undertaking control works.

Community involvement

In addition to the input of the community to shape the development of this project, local landholders and community groups will be engaged to participate in on-ground works.

Funding is available for landholders and community groups to purchase tools and equipment to enable them to tackle priority species in their local area. Workshops equipping participants with identification and control skills will be run for communities throughout the project area.



Government of South Australia
Department for Environment
and Water



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Yellow water lily
(*Nymphaea mexicana*)

This aquatic perennial has bright green fleshy, oval-shaped leaves that float on the water's surface. It has bright yellow flowers that are about 10 centimetres wide with multiple petals. Yellow water lily spreads easily and can quickly take over wetlands and backwaters, restricting water flow and access by river users.



Sagittaria
(*Sagittaria platyphylla*)

Introduced from North America, outbreaks of this aquatic weed can reduce or change water flows, reduce water quality and restrict the movement of fish and other aquatic animals. The leaves of the plant are narrow oval shaped and flowers have three small white petals. Sagittaria reproduces by growing underwater stems.



Cacti
(*Opuntia sp.*)

Opuntia species generally have fleshy, succulent flat pads that are round, oblong or egg shaped. Most species have spines that can cause harm to animals and humans, and red-pink fruit that can be a fruit fly host. They are easily spread, growing from seed and re-sprouting from pieces of plant material.



African boxthorn
(*Lycium ferocissimum*)

This large perennial shrub can grow up to 5 metres high and 3 metres wide, with branches ending in spines. It can easily form a dense thicket. Leaves are light green and fleshy, and flowers are approximately 1 cm in diameter and consist of five white petals with purple dots. The small round berries are an orange-red colour, ranging between 5 and 10 millimetres in diameter.



Boneseed
(*Chrysanthemoides mollifera*)

An erect perennial shrub that poses a threat to native vegetation due to competition. Leaves are bright green, 3 to 8 centimetres long and waxy with a serrated edge.

The bright yellow flowers are daisy like, and fruits are dry berries 6-8 millimetres in diameter that turn from green, to black then white as they mature.



Golden dodder
(*Cuscuta campestris*)

This parasitic weed requires a broadleaf host plant to grow, and is easily distinguished by its thin bright yellow threadlike stems. Flowers are white or cream bell-shaped and usually have 5 petals. In the river corridor, this plant is typically found hosting on weed species such as noogoora and Bathurst burr, with seed spread easily by moving water.

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