

DECLARED PLANT

Bluebell creeper *Billardiera heterophylla*

January 2015

Bluebell creeper is a vine with twining stems, bearing blue, bell-shaped flowers. It takes on a shrubby habit in open situations. Grown as an ornamental plant in the temperate zones of Australia, it has become a garden escapee into native bushland.

It is now declared under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*, with prohibition on sale throughout South Australia and enforced control in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, Kangaroo Island and South East NRM regions.

- **Other Common names:** sollya, Western Australian bluebell creeper
- **Family:** Pittosporaceae
- **Synonyms:** *Sollya heterophylla*, *Sollya heterophylla*, *Sollya erecta*, *Sollya fusiformis*
- **Origin:** Native to south-western Western Australia

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM?

Bluebell creeper has spread beyond its native range as environmental weed.

- rapidly invades native and pine forests
- vigorous twining stems smother the native understorey and groundcover layer, also preventing regeneration of shrubs and trees
- regenerates readily from a persistent soil seed bank after disturbance or control



bluebell creeper - Biosecurity SA



bluebell creeper infestation - Biosecurity SA



For more information

Contact your local Natural Resources Centre for information on controlling declared weeds:

www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au

Further weed control information is also available at:

www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecuritysa

DESCRIPTION

Habit: vigorous climber reaching 3-4 m tall. **Leaves:** light to dark green, glossy and hairless varying from 2-5 cm long. They are alternately arranged, ranging from narrowly oblong to lance shaped. **Stems:** juvenile stems are reddish-brown, becoming woody as they mature. **Flowers:** pendant clusters of 2-5 small blue to mauve (sometimes pink or white), bell-shaped flowers 8-12 mm long. *Flowering time* mainly spring to summer. **Fruit:** succulent, green, cylindrical berries to 3.5 cm long, maturing to purplish green, containing numerous seeds 2-3 mm long.

HOW IT SPREADS

Seed is dispersed by birds and other animals such as foxes consuming fruit. Seed germination is promoted by fire and soil disturbance. Underground resprouting from root segments will occur if above-ground plant parts are damaged, forming an extensive horizontal root system of many metres. Spread is also assisted by dumping of garden waste.

HABITAT

Bluebell creeper can be found in dry sclerophyll forest and woodland, grassland and heath ecosystems. It also occurs in riparian areas.

DISTRIBUTION

Established in the Southern Lofty, Kangaroo Island and South East regions. Native in Western Australia, and also naturalised in New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Seek control advice if you have this weed. Select alternatives to replace invasive species. Read 'Grow Me Instead' for suggestions.

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