

THUNBERGIA

WEED OF THE MONTH

WANTED: THUNBERGIA

Thunbergia vine is a weed that grows in riparian zones where it can smother riverbank, disturbed closed forests, open woodlands, roadsides, fence lines, gardens and plantation crops.

Thunbergia vine (*Thunbergia grandiflora*), also known as blue thunbergia, was sold in Queensland as a garden plant, and now causes considerable environmental damage.



The plant climbs and blankets native vegetation, with the weight of the vine often pulling down mature trees. It reduces the amount of sunlight to lower layers of vegetation, drastically limiting natural growth.

Blue thunbergia reproduces

when the seed pods split and the seeds are projected several metres. The weed is also capable of regenerating from stem fragments or root portions. Thunbergia can also be spread from garden waste or in infected soil.

Here are some tips to help you identify thunbergia:

- Thunbergia is a perennial twining vine that can climb up to 15m.
- The leaves are dark green and heart shaped with a broad base narrowing to a pointed tip.
- The flowers are trumpet shaped with a short, broad tube and white and pale yellow throat, which expands to five rounded, pale lavender-blue petals. Flowering occurs throughout the year.
- The seed pod is cone shaped with a 3-5cm long, rounded base. The seed is flat and covered in brown scales. The fruit is a capsule with a rounded base and a long point on the end.
- The plant produces a massive

USEFUL CONTACTS

- www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/herbarium/identify-specimens
- www.cook.qld.gov.au/services/biosecurity/plants

root system, with some roots weighing 70kg. The root system, when cut, insistently sprouts sap.

Please help us to target this invasive plant for early detection and eradication.

If you are unsure whether you have found thunbergia, send a sample to the Queensland Herbarium for identification. Instructions on how to collect and send a sample via this free service can be found on the Herbarium website.

If your sample is thunbergia or another weed, contact Council's Biosecurity Services team for treatment or management plans.