

K R U H K R X Q

(*Marrubium vulgare*)



Lynton Bond

Weed: horehound



Jackie Miles/Max Campbell

Weed: horehound

Note the flowers in axil of upper leaves

Why is horehound a weed?

- Tolerates drought and poor soils
- Spreads when overgrazing or drought removes more palatable species
- Invades disturbed ground especially in old stock camps, rabbit warrens, on grazing land, roadsides and waste ground
- Not very palatable to stock and the plants flavour taints meat if grazed

Description

Plant: bushy perennial aromatic herb (in the mint family) to about 30cm high, square stems

Leaves: near-circular, opposite, grey-green, velvety, wrinkled with toothed edges, hairy

Seeds: 1-2mm long, up to 4 per burr

Flowers: small white flowers carried in dense clusters in the axils of the upper leaves

Dispersal via

- Burrs are spread when they attach to animals, clothing and car tyres
- Seed can be spread in mud carried on vehicles
- In water
- In the gut of stock then dispersed in dung

Status

Horehound is listed as a class 4 noxious weed in both the Palerang Council and Cooma-Monaro Shire Council. The growth and spread of the plant must be controlled in accordance with local management plans published by each local council. Although it is not listed as noxious in the Queanbeyan City Council or as a pest plant in the ACT, it is an important species to control in all areas due to its invasive nature.



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Look-alikes

The related **wild sage** (*Salvia verbenaca*) is another common aromatic weed with a less bushy habit. Its leaves are oval and more deeply toothed, less woolly and on longer stalks. Flowers are blue-purple in terminal spikes.

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Weed: wild sage

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Control methods

For advice on what time of year to implement the following management options, see the Molonglo Catchment Weed Control Calendar.

Dig or spot spray small plants/infestations. Boom spray larger infestations prior to seeding. Burn plants after chipping or spraying if seed is present, or bag and dispose of at local government tip. Fire will stimulate germination of most soil-stored seed but must be followed by a comprehensive control program or it will just create a greater problem.

Seek advice on chemical application from your Council Weeds Officer or local 'bush friendly' nursery. Always use chemicals as directed on the label. Consult the Rural Fire Service for permits and advice before using fire as part of your management methods; in urban areas also contact the local council/control authority.

The biological control, plume moth (*Wheeleria spilodactylus*), has been released in NSW. It is available and easy to rear and has made a reasonable impact. Contact the Molonglo Catchment Coordinator for information on how to access these biological controls.

Combine these control methods with revegetation using desirable perennial species.