

BURRS Bathurst & Noogoora Burrs

(*Xanthium spinosum* & *X. occidentale*)



Weed: Bathurst burr



Weed: Bathurst burr infestation



Weed: Noogoora burr

Why are Bathurst and Noogoora burrs weeds?

- Invasive, growing to dominate pasture, roadside and waste ground
- Burrs severely affect wool, causing vegetable fault and loss of production
- Cause discomfort to people handling sheep
- Plants (especially young growth) toxic to sheep, pigs and cattle
- Out-competes native species
- Summer crop production can be reduced due to burrs competing for resources

Description

Bathurst burr:

Plant: erect annual herb to 1m, single stemmed or branched, three pronged stiff yellow spines, each to 2.5cm long at base of leaves and stems

Leaves: dark shiny green, narrow, to 5cm long, lobed (usually 3, sometimes 5 lobes), distinct whitish vein, whitish green underside

Seeds: 2, black or brown, contained in each burr

Flowers: small and creamy green

Fruit: brownish egg shaped burrs 1-2cm long with multiple hooked spines

Noogoora burr:

Plant: annual to 2m tall, bushy form, spineless stems, common in streambanks

Leaves: large, green, lobed and toothed leaves (similar shape to grape leaves), rough to touch, purple vein and leaf stalk, paler green underside

Seeds: 2 per burr, black or brown

Flowers: small, found in leaf axils and branch ends

Fruit: burrs with multiple hooked spines, slightly larger than in Bathurst burr and has two straight short spines at end of burr

John Gasparotto



Weed: Noogoora burr seedlings

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Weed: Noogoora burr

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Dispersal via

- Burrs attach to animals and humans and are then spread from place to place
- Spread in soil on vehicles/machinery
- Carried in water (the burrs float)

Status

Both Bathurst and Noogoora burr are listed as class 4 noxious weeds in all council areas within the Molonglo Catchment. The growth and spread of the plants must be controlled in accordance with local management plans published by each local council.

In the ACT, Bathurst and Noogoora burr are a class 2 Pest Plants which must be suppressed.

Look-alikes

The poisonous **common thornapple** (*Datura stramonium*) is a similar weed. It can be distinguished via its large white trumpet shaped flowers and larger burrs containing multiple seeds.

Jackie Miles/Max Campbell



Weed: common thornapple

Control methods

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

Management should be conducted prior to burrs forming. Dig or hand pull small plants. Cut at ground level (the plants can't regrow without their leaves and therefore chemicals are not required). If burrs are present on plant when cutting, the remains will require burning to prevent maturation and germination of seed. 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 - your local weeds officer can assist with the safe disposal of removed weed species.

For larger infestations, spot spray. Seek advice on chemical application from your Council Weeds Officer or local 'bush friendly' nursery. Always use chemicals as directed on the label.