

Alligator Weed - Statutory Weed Management Plan

***Alternanthera philoxeroides* (Mart.) Griseb.**

Interpretation:

In this Weed Management Plan (approved 30 August 2003)
(amendments approved 21 June 2011):

- "Act" means the *Weed Management Act 1999*.
- "Approved quarantine place" means a place approved by the Secretary under section 70 of the *Plant Quarantine Act 1997* for the purpose of examining any prescribed matter imported into or to be exported out of the State.
- "Court fine" means a prescribed penalty for breaches against the *Act*. Court fines may be imposed if a person is convicted of any offence against the *Act*.
- "DPIPWE" means the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, Tasmania.
- "Infringement fine" means a prescribed penalty for breaches against the *Act*. Infringement fines are imposed by way of an infringement notice that may be issued by a Weed Inspector.
- "Inspector" means a Weed Inspector appointed under section 34 of the *Act*.
- "Penalty unit" means the basic unit of the fine for which persons who fail to comply with any prohibition or requirement under the *Act* may be liable. See [values of penalty units](#) under the *Penalty Units and Other Penalties Act 1987* for more details.
- "Quarantine Tasmania" means that branch of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment that, in cooperation with the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, maintains both overseas and interstate quarantine barriers for this State.
- "[Regional Weed Management Officer](#)" means a person employed in the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment under that specific title.
- "Regulations" means the *Weed Management Regulations 2007*.
- "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.
- "Zone A" includes those Tasmanian municipalities for which eradication of a declared weed is the principal management objective. These municipalities are either free of the declared weed, host only small, isolated infestations, or host larger infestations which are deemed eradicable because a strategic management plan exists and the resources required to implement it have been or are likely to be secured. See [Management of alligator weed by municipality](#) (Section 12) for details.

- “Zone B” includes those Tasmanian municipalities for which containment of the declared weed is the principal management objective. Such municipalities host large, widespread infestations of the declared weed that are not deemed eradicable because the feasibility of effective management is low at this time. These municipalities lack a strategic management plan for the weed and/or resources to undertake control actions at a level required for eradication have not been secured. See [Management of alligator weed by municipality](#) (Section 12) for details.
- “Alligator weed” means *Alternanthera philoxeroides* (Mart.) Griseb. (syn. *Achyranthes philoxeroides*, *Bucholzia philoxeroides*, *Telanthera philoxeroides*) and includes the whole plant or plant parts, live or dead.

1. Purpose of this management plan:

The purpose of this Weed Management Plan for alligator weed is to:

- Provide direction upon the implementation of the Act with respect to alligator weed.
- Specify measures to prevent the establishment and spread of alligator weed in Tasmania.

2. Area covered by this management plan:

The State of Tasmania is covered by this Weed Management Plan

3. Description and distribution of the weed:

Alligator weed is a mat-forming herb that causes major damage in freshwater aquatic and semi-aquatic environments in several Australian mainland locations.

There are no known naturalised alligator weed populations in Tasmania. However, the plant has been recorded in domestic gardens in both the north and south of the State.

See the DPIPW [Alligator Weed Information Page](#) for more information on this weed.

4. Importation of declared weed:

(1) A person must not import or allow to be imported into Tasmania any alligator weed.

It is an offence against section 57(1) of the Act to fail to comply with this prohibition. A person found committing that offence may incur an infringement fine of 4 penalty units. A person convicted in court of that offence may be liable to a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units.

The Secretary may exempt a person from this prohibition under section 60 of the Act.

To avoid committing this offence, actions including but not limited to the following should be undertaken:

- Persons travelling to Tasmania, in particular from areas infested with alligator weed should conduct thorough searches for the presence of the plant and apply appropriate hygiene measures, such as vehicle, boat and baggage cleaning. In particular, any mud or water taken from infested areas should be removed prior to entering Tasmania. Questions or concerns about hygiene issues should be directed to Quarantine Tasmania personnel before or directly upon disembarkation in Tasmania.
- Persons importing items to Tasmania that may contain alligator weed should have these checked for the presence of the plant. This can be arranged through Quarantine Tasmania.
- Persons importing vegetables or herbs for any reason should verify that the species they are importing do not include alligator weed. Importers should discuss the issue with suppliers. Plant identification queries may be referred to a Regional Weed Management Officer.
- Persons importing aquarium or pond plants should verify that the species they are importing do not include alligator weed. As plant labels are sometimes ambiguous or in error, these should not be relied upon for verification of a plant's identity. Plant identification queries may be referred to a Regional Weed Management Officer.
- Persons importing aquarium or pond fish or other freshwater animals should also check that the water used for transporting these organisms does not contain alligator weed material.
- Persons importing boats or boating equipment (e.g. nets, outboards) should check that these items have been thoroughly cleaned so that no plant material adheres to any part.
- Persons buying imported herb, vegetable, aquarium or pond products (including mail-order and internet purchases) should keep comprehensive records of their transactions, including the contact details of the supplier and date of purchase.
- Persons importing livestock to Tasmania should liaise with suppliers on the subject of possible alligator weed contamination, particularly in mud attached to hooves of stock or to the feathers and feet of waterfowl.

Note: The importation of this species into Tasmania is also restricted under the *Plant Quarantine Act 1997*. Quarantine Tasmania should be contacted for information on the relevance and application of the *Plant Quarantine Act 1997* to activities concerning plant species.

5. Procedures for notification of the occurrence of the weed:

Inspectors shall notify a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) of any alligator weed occurrences. The Regional Weed Management Officer will then check the identity of the plant and if alligator weed is confirmed the Principal Weed Management Officer will initiate a weed incursion response.

6. Sale, purchase, propagation, use, &c., of declared weed:

(1) A person must not:

(a) sell alligator weed or any material or thing containing or carrying alligator weed; or

(b) purchase or offer to purchase alligator weed or any material or thing containing or carrying alligator weed; or

(c) grow, propagate or scatter alligator weed; or

(d) store alligator weed or any material or thing containing or carrying alligator weed; or

(e) hire or offer for hire any material or thing containing or carrying alligator weed; or

(f) use alligator weed or any material or thing containing or carrying alligator weed; or

(g) deal with alligator weed or any material or thing containing or carrying alligator weed in any manner that is likely to result in the spread of the declared weed.

It is an offence against section 56(1) of the Act to fail to comply with this prohibition. A person found committing that offence may incur an infringement fine of 4 penalty units. A person convicted in court of that offence may be liable to a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units.

The Secretary may exempt a person from this prohibition under section 60 of the Act.

To avoid committing this offence, actions including but not limited to the following, should be undertaken:

- Persons giving away, bartering or selling, purchasing, growing, propagating or scattering, storing, using, or otherwise dealing with vegetables and herbs should take steps to ensure that the plants in their possession do not include alligator weed. This applies in particular to persons dealing in plants used in Asian cuisine.
- Persons giving away, bartering or selling, purchasing, growing, propagating or scattering, storing, using, or otherwise dealing with aquarium or pond plants should verify that the plants in their possession do not include alligator weed. Plant labels that accompany aquarium or pond plants and advice from suppliers should not be relied upon absolutely for identification purposes. Any plant identification queries may be referred to a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#).

(2) It is a defence in proceedings for an offence under section 56(1) of the Act if the defendant establishes that he or she took all reasonable actions to prevent the commission of the offence.

7. Measures to reduce the number of alligator weed plants, eradicate alligator weed from an area or restrict alligator weed to a particular area:

An inspector may, by serving a notice on the owner of a place, require that owner to implement any of the measures described in this part of the Weed Management Plan or any other measures consistent with it.

It is an offence against section 13(3) of the Act to fail to comply with a requirement notice issued by an Inspector. A person found committing that offence may incur an infringement fine of 8 penalty units. A person convicted of that offence in court may be liable to a fine not exceeding 100 penalty units and, in the case of a continuing offence, a further fine not exceeding 5 penalty units for each day during which the offence continues.

To avoid committing this offence, actions including but not limited to the following, should be undertaken:

- Persons growing vegetables and herbs for personal consumption, distribution to friends and relatives or, for sale should ensure that their plant stock does not include alligator weed.
- Persons maintaining aquarium or pond plants or propagating them for distribution should take steps to ensure that their plant stock does not include alligator weed. These steps include

purchasing from reputable suppliers, checking that plant purchases do not include incidental, unknown plants and having any suspect plants identified by a Regional Weed Management Officer.

- A person wishing to dispose of alligator weed or any thing contaminated with alligator weed should notify a Weed Inspector or a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) first, in order to receive direction and advice upon how best to do this.

8. Storage in a specified area of any thing contaminated with the declared weed:

Any thing found to be contaminated with alligator weed may be removed to storage at an appropriate quarantine approved place. A [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) will determine whether removal to storage at any of these facilities or treatment/destruction of material *in situ* is most appropriate.

Failure to comply with this requirement is an offence against section 51(1) of the Act. A person found committing that offence may incur an infringement fine of 4 penalty units. A person convicted of that offence in court will be liable to a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units.

The Secretary may exempt a person from this requirement under section 60 of the Act.

To avoid committing this offence, actions including but not limited to the following, should be undertaken:

- A person who discovers or suspects he/she possesses any thing, (e.g. aquarium, pond or aquaculture supplies, soil, vegetables or herbs) contaminated with alligator weed should contact an Inspector or a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) without delay. The contaminated thing should not be moved, disturbed, treated or disposed of prior to making this contact. If alligator weed is confirmed, the person will be directed and advised in the proper management, including disposal, of the contaminated thing.

9. Any other measures the Minister considers appropriate to control the weed:

There are no other measures appropriate for the management of alligator weed in Tasmania at this time.

10. Exemptions:

Persons wishing to gain exemption from any of provisions of the Act that relate to alligator weed should contact a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#) to discuss the reasons for seeking the exemption and obtain an exemption application form.

Persons granted an exemption should ensure they understand fully, any conditions specified in the exemption. Queries can be directed to a [Regional Weed Management Officer](#).

11. Review of this Weed Management Plan:

A review of this Weed Management Plan may be undertaken at least once every five years if it is necessary and desirable to do so. The review will incorporate consultation with stakeholders deemed appropriate by the Secretary, DPIPW.

12. Management of alligator weed by municipality:

Each Tasmanian municipality is classified into one of two management zones (Zones A or B) for the purposes of implementing this Weed Management Plan for alligator weed.

Zone A Municipalities - eradication: Eradication is the most appropriate management objective for Zone A municipalities which have little or no alligator weed, or when a credible plan for eradicating existing infestations is being developed and implemented. The ultimate management outcome for Zone A municipalities is achieving and maintaining the total absence of alligator weed from within municipal boundaries.

Zone B municipalities - containment: Containment is the most appropriate management objective for Zone B municipalities which have problematic infestations but no plan and/or resources to undertake control actions at a level required for eradication. The management outcome for Zone B municipalities is ongoing prevention of the spread of alligator weed from existing infestations to areas free or in the process of becoming free of alligator weed.

The decision regarding which category is most appropriate for a particular municipality at a particular time is made jointly by DPIPW and each municipality. Municipalities may change categories over time. For example, a Zone B municipality may decide to develop and implement a strategic plan for alligator weed, with eradication as the objective. Provided the plan is credible, this municipality would qualify for inclusion in Zone A. Conversely, a Zone A municipality with widespread infestations may decide to stop supporting a strategic plan for alligator weed eradication, in which case it would be re-classified as Zone B.

There are no known naturalised alligator weed populations in Tasmania. Therefore all municipalities are currently classed as Zone A (eradication) for alligator weed.