

# Burr ragweed (*Ambrosia confertiflora*)

## Weed management guide

Weed type  
**Herb**

November 2022

[www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west](http://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west)



In NSW, weeds are regulated by the NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015. All land managers have a General Biosecurity Duty to contain the spread of weeds.

*“General Biosecurity Duty means that any person dealing with plant matter must take measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate the biosecurity risk (as far as is reasonably practicable).”*

The Regional priority for Burr ragweed is to protect assets from the weed’s impacts and to prevent its arrival and establishment in the region. In order to achieve this, Land Managers are asked to: *Mitigate the risk of introduction and reduce impacts on priority assets. The plant should not be bought, sold, grown, carried, or released into the environment. Notify local control authority if found.*

For further information, contact your local Biosecurity (Weeds) Officer via Central West Local Land Services or visit NSW WeedWise.

NSW WeedWise





# Habit and description

Burr ragweed is a large, erect perennial herb that can grow to 2m tall. Leaves are alternately arranged and coarsely divided (bipinnate or more). Flowers are located on elongated spikes with male flowers above and female flowers in the leaf axes. Burr ragweed flowers are usually cream to greenish-yellow. Each plant produces numerous fruits that are covered in hooked spines that can easily attach to fur and clothing. Burr ragweed is summer flowering.



Photo: © Andy McKinnon | NSW DPI



Photo: © Andy McKinnon | NSW DPI



Photo: © Andy McKinnon | NSW DPI



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# Reproduction and spread

Burr ragweed spreads primarily via seed through the burrs. The barbed spines on the burr can attach to clothing, machinery, animal fur/fleece and vehicle tyres. Agricultural activities can easily spread this weed into new areas.

## Impacts

### Agriculture



- Not palatable to livestock.
- Can form barriers to other plants by creating thick stands.
- Burrs difficult to remove from wool.
- Lower yield of wool due to contamination.

### Native vegetation



- Burr ragweed is a Weed of National Significance (WoNS) in Australia (NSW DPI, 2017).
- Rapidly spreads into native vegetation through animal vectors.
- Toxic to wildlife.
- Outcompete native ground cover by forming thick stands.

## Management

### Chemical



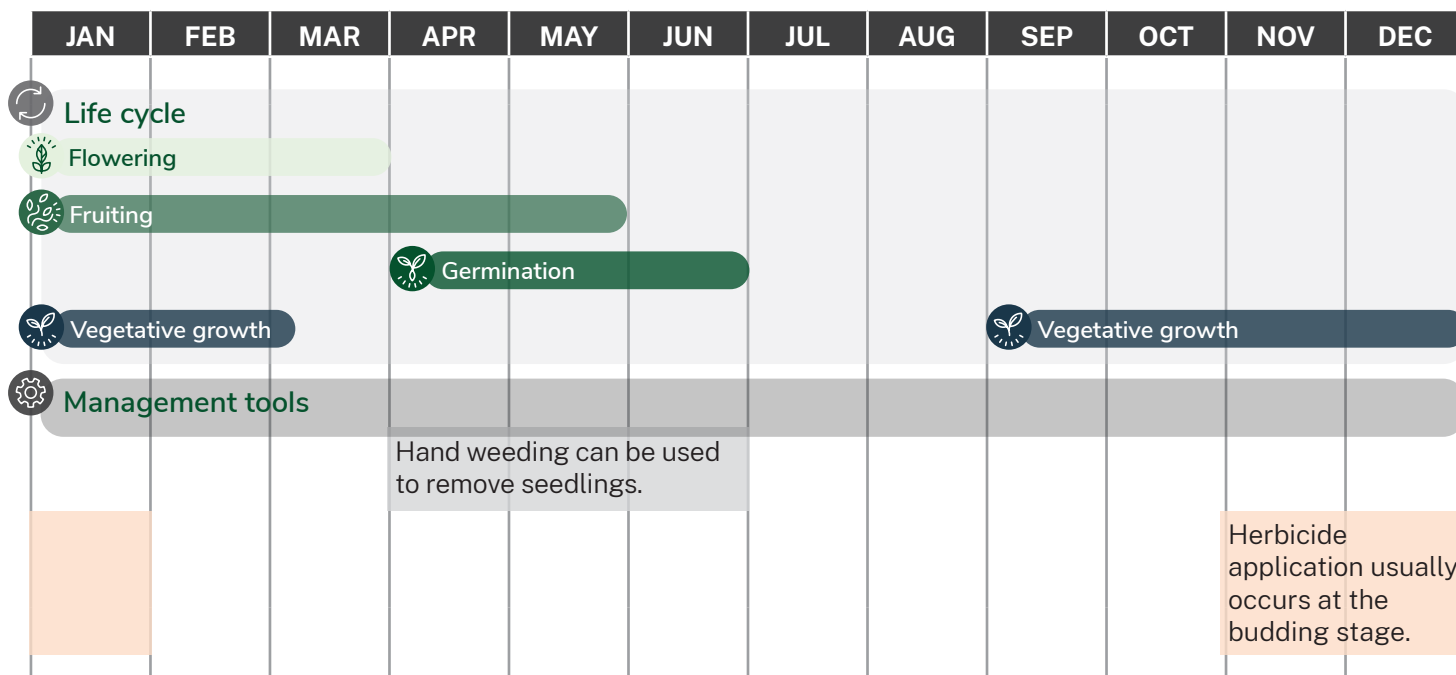
- Systemic herbicide is needed to destroy root system.
- Spot spray isolated plants or small patches.
- Seek the guidance of an experienced Weeds Officer for expert advice on herbicide use.
- Visit [www.apvma.gov.au](http://www.apvma.gov.au) for a list of registered products, product labels and permit requirements.
- NSW DPI (2021) provides a list of recommended herbicides for the control of Burr ragweed at <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/BurrRagweed>.

### Non-chemical



- Mechanical removal is not recommended as it can worsen the infestation.
- Hand weeding is possible on seedlings when root systems are less developed.
- Cultivation can be strategically used to stimulate germination to remove dormant seed bank.
- Prevention of spread by using proper machinery hygiene practices.

# Management calendar



Optimal control options may vary depending on your location and climate. Consult an experienced Weeds Officer based in your local government area for control methods suited to your conditions.

All herbicides must be used in accordance with the herbicide label and permit requirements.

## Further information

For more information on your general biosecurity duties, visit [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity).

For the best guidance on how to meet this duty on your property, contact your expert Weeds Officer at your local council or via Local Land Services [www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west](http://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west).

NSW WeedWise



## References

- EPP0. (2020). PM 9/30 (1) *Ambrosia confertiflora*. EPP0 Bulletin, 50(3), 510–514. <https://doi.org/10.1111/epp.12686>
- NSW DPI. (2017). *Weed categories*. <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds/weed-categories>
- NSW DPI. (2021). *NSW WeedWise*. <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/burrageweed>
- Weeds Australia. (2021). *Ambrosia confertiflora*, Weeds Australia – Profiles. <https://profiles.ala.org.au/opus/weeds-australia/profile/Ambrosia%20confertiflora>

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