

Have you seen gorse along a waterway?

Gorse is a serious threat to our waterway health

Introduced from western Europe, gorse is an incredibly prickly, dense, evergreen legume which can grow up to 4m high and 3m diameter.

Waterways are a main source of gorse seed spread, with gorse upstream impacting on clean properties downstream.

- Gorse greatly hinders access to waterways and recreational areas.
- Gorse can outcompete and exclude all other native plants.
- Gorse undermines connected habitats.
- Gorse reduces open spaces and productive grazing land.
- Gorse impacts on natural aesthetics of a waterway.
- Gorse is a significant haven for feral animals which bring further impacts.

Controlling gorse along a waterway

'Cut and Paint': A useful control method in sensitive areas to prevent off-target damage. Cut stems as low as possible and immediately smear the cut with a registered herbicide to prevent regrowth.

De-bulking: Plants can be brush-cut, lopped, slashed/mulched, or felled to reduce the bulk and increase access for follow up treatment or spraying when plants regrow to at least 40cm high.

Physical removal: Small plants can be hand-hoed or larger plants grubbed; keeping in mind that disturbances can cause rapid gorse regeneration and stream bank erosion.

Follow Up Control:

- Follow up control on resprouting gorse prior to it seeding, is key to preventing reinfestation.
- Follow up for at least two years before revegetating the land with grasses or shrubs.
- Optimum treatment can be all year round.

Use of chemicals

Victorian legislation controls the use of agricultural chemicals, and it is the user's responsibility to be familiar with this legislation. Some chemicals require the user to hold an Agricultural Chemical Users Permit (ACUP). Agriculture Victoria provides a guide to using agricultural chemicals in Victoria as well as a list of sensitive areas.

Note: Choose only products registered for use in your situation and always read the label and follow the instructions carefully.

Now one of Australia's worst weeds, gorse is listed as a **Weed of National Significance (WoNS)** due to its invasiveness, impacts, potential for spread and negative effects on economic, environmental and social values.

Under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, both public and private landowners within the Melbourne Water operating area, being the Port Philip and Westernport region, are responsible for preventing the growth and spread of gorse on their land.



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More information

- **Reach out to your local Catchment Management Authority (CMA)** for assistance keeping our riparian land in good condition. If you are a private landholder in Melbourne Water's operating area, you can now apply for **project funding** under the **Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways program**.
 - If you are considering activities that improve waterway health or biodiversity, preference is given to projects that fall within the priority areas shown on Melbourne Water's [interactive map](#). You can apply for a combination of activities on the one application form.
 - More information on the **Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways program** and the online application form can be found here: [Information for Private Landholders](#)
- **Visit the [VGT website](#)** for additional control suggestions, information around planning and an integrated approach.
- **Weeds of National Significance - Gorse - [National Best Practice Manual 2006](#)**



Created by the Victorian Gorse Taskforce with support from Melbourne Water

