

Water dropwort (*Oenanthe pimpinelloides*)



Water dropwort (*Oenanthe pimpinelloides*) is a poisonous erect perennial herb that easily displaces pasture species. It is a declared weed under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019*.

Description

This plant grows up to 1.5 meters tall, featuring leaf rosettes reminiscent of wild geranium. Its nearly leafless stems bear white flowers from late spring to summer, remaining upright to support umbrella-shaped seed clusters. Along the roots, rounded tubers about 20mm in diameter develop. The seeds are 3mm long, boat-shaped, ribbed, and equipped with two hooks at one end, aiding dispersal.

Impacts

Water dropwort can outcompete native vegetation and replace pasture species during the summer months. It is unpalatable to livestock, reducing its value as forage.

Additionally, it may be toxic to certain animals, posing a potential risk to grazing herds.

Seeds of this plant can spread through water, livestock movement, contaminated hay, and machinery. Tubers may also contribute to its dispersal, especially via watercourses. Both seeds and tubers can act as contaminants in hay, increasing the risk of unintentional spread.

Distribution

Water dropwort is currently known to occur in the Adelaide Hills, growing in various locations with water-logged pastures, and occasionally on roadsides.

Water dropwort may have more significant impacts if it is ever established in irrigated pastures.

Control methods

There are no registered chemicals to control water dropwort in South Australia. Research has indicated that many common herbicides that target a wide spectrum of broadleaf weeds may be useful in controlling spot infestations.

However, these chemicals could be harmful to useful pasture species and are unsuitable for use around watercourses. The solution for the infested pastures around Meadows is pasture renovation with a perennial grass.

Competition from perennial grasses reduces seedling survival, therefore maintaining a dense pasture is an effective management strategy.

Effective grazing by sheep in winter improves density through tillering of the phalaris and clover, but cattle may bare the ground by pugging, giving water dropwort seedlings sites to establish.

What to do

If you suspect that you have water dropwort on your land, contact us for a free site visit.

Declarations

The following sections of the Landscape SA Act apply to coolatai grass in the Hills and Fleurieu region:

- 186(2) Cannot transport the plant or anything carrying it
- 188(1) Cannot sell the plant
- 188(2) Cannot sell any produce / goods carrying the plant
- 192(2) Landowner must control the plant on their land
- 194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves

Further information

Further information is available through Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu

Mount Barker Office:
Cnr Mann & Walker streets, Mount Barker
(08) 8391 7500



Keep in touch with our activities
through **Facebook** [@HFLandscapesSA](https://www.facebook.com/HFLandscapesSA)

landscape.sa.gov.au/hf