

Sweet briar

Sweet briar (*Rosa rubiginosa*) is a thorny shrub which originated in Europe and is now widespread throughout NSW. It is common on the tablelands and cooler slopes, often taking over native pastures and bushland.

WHAT IS SWEET BRIAR?

Sweet briar (*Rosa rubiginosa*) is a species of rose and is commonly found in the Mid-Western Region. It is problematic to landholders as it reduces the carrying capacity of land, restricting vehicle and stock movement. It also provides a haven for rabbits and other feral animals, especially when found in large clumps.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Sweet briar is mainly spread by birds and other animals eating the fruit and distributing the viable seed, or via run-off. Seeds can remain viable in ideal soil for up to four years. Broken root fragments and disturbed crowns can also create new growth and suckers.

IDENTIFYING SWEET BRIAR

An upright, perennial plant that grows to between one to two metres in height (but can reach up to three metres), Sweet briar produces multiple stems from the root stock which extend to one metre in length. The stems of the plant are smooth when young, becoming rough and woody with age, while the leaves have an apple-like fragrance and are pinnate in structure, consisting of two to four pairs. Each leaf is up to four centimetres long with small prickles along the leaf stalks.



Leaves

Compound, with 2–4 pairs of short ovate or broadly elliptical leaflets, each 1–4cm long, with small prickles along the leaf stalks.



Flowers

Pink or white and 2–4cm in diameter and forming clusters at ends of branches, once plant is 3 years of age.



Fruit

An orange to red capsule with short spikes at the stalk.



Stems

Smooth when young but become rough and woody when matured.

Images: NSW DPI

HOW TO MANAGE SWEET BRIAR

Early detection and continual follow-up and monitoring will ensure successful control of Sweet briar.

Identify

Learn to identify and distinguish various stages of growth, especially in hilly and rocky country, around trees on creek banks and along fence lines.



Early detection

Sweet briar will usually start with one or two small plants. Mechanical removal can be completed – remove, bag and dispose. A herbicide spot spray should then be carried out on the treated area.



For mature plants, a number of techniques can be used.

Mechanical control



Established plants can be removed by hand. This is easiest when the ground is wet.

Sites should be monitored for any regrowth and be treated.

Grazing management



Grazing is a useful control as sheep will readily graze young seedlings and help prevent their establishment. Sweet briar is very palatable to goats, who will graze established plants and seedlings, continually defoliating stems which will eventually ring-bark them. This kills established plants and prevents seedlings from establishing.

Chemical management



Herbicide treatments can be applied in many different ways. The most appropriate application will depend on size, maturity and location of the plants. Only use registered herbicides according to label directions.

RESPONSIBILITY

Land owners under the *Biosecurity Act 2015* have a General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) where they are expected to, within reason know about any weeds which may impact their land. Owners should have a plan of management in place to reduce, minimise or eliminate the risk posed by weeds on their property.

When reporting Sweet briar, the infected area will be inspected by Council along with a management plan strategy. A follow-up inspection will then be arranged. Council is responsible for enforcing the *Biosecurity Act 2015* and its regulations. This includes fines for failure to comply with GBD.

GET THE FREE WEEDS APP

NSW WeedWise is provided as a free smartphone app through the app stores. Users can search or browse weed names (common or scientific), recognise a weed by its physical description and image gallery, and find out about its impacts, where it occurs, how it spreads and its preferred habitat.

General, State or Regional biosecurity duties under the *Biosecurity Act 2015* are displayed for each weed.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit Council's website midwestern.nsw.gov.au, or the NSW DPI website www.dpi.nsw.gov.au and search 'weeds'. Council's Weeds Team are available to assist on 6378 2939 or at weeds.admin@midwestern.nsw.gov.au.

DISCLAIMER | The information contained in this fact sheet is general in nature and should not be relied upon as the complete source of information to be considered. This document is not intended as a substitute for consulting relevant legislation or for obtaining appropriate professional advice relevant to your particular circumstances.

References: NSW DPI