

# Blue heliotrope (*Heliotropium amplexicaule*)

## 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 Blue heliotrope 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: **Whole region:** The plant should not be bought, sold, grown, carried or released into the environment. **Exclusion Zone:** The plant should be eradicated and eradication maintained. Mitigate the risk of introduction. **Core infestation area:** Mitigate the risk of new weeds being introduced to their land and reduce impacts on priority assets.

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

NSW WeedWise



# Habit and description

Blue heliotrope is a hairy, low-growing perennial herb native to South America. Stems are highly branched and can grow to 15cm tall. Leaves are alternate, lance-shaped with wavy margins and can grow to 4cm long. Flowers have distinctly yellow bearded throats and are purple in colour. Flowers grown in clusters on one side of a curled stalk. Blue heliotrope flowers spring to early autumn.



Photo: © John Hosking | NSW DPI



Photo: © Auld and Medd | NSW DPI



Photo: © J. J. Dellow | NSW DPI



Photo: © J Kidston | NSW DPI

# Reproduction and spread

Blue heliotrope can spread vegetatively through root fragments and via seed. It can invade new areas aggressively due to its sticky seed that can attach to animals, machinery and clothes. Seed remain viable after digestion by animals. Regeneration can occur from root fragments and improper removal and lead to further spread.

## Impacts

### Agriculture

- Competes with pasture plants.
- Toxic to livestock.
- Drought-hardy and persistent.
- Contaminate stock feed.



### Native vegetation

- Rapidly spreads into native vegetation through animal vectors.
- Toxic to wildlife.
- Outcompete native ground cover.



## 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 Blue heliotrope at <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/BlueHeliotrope>.

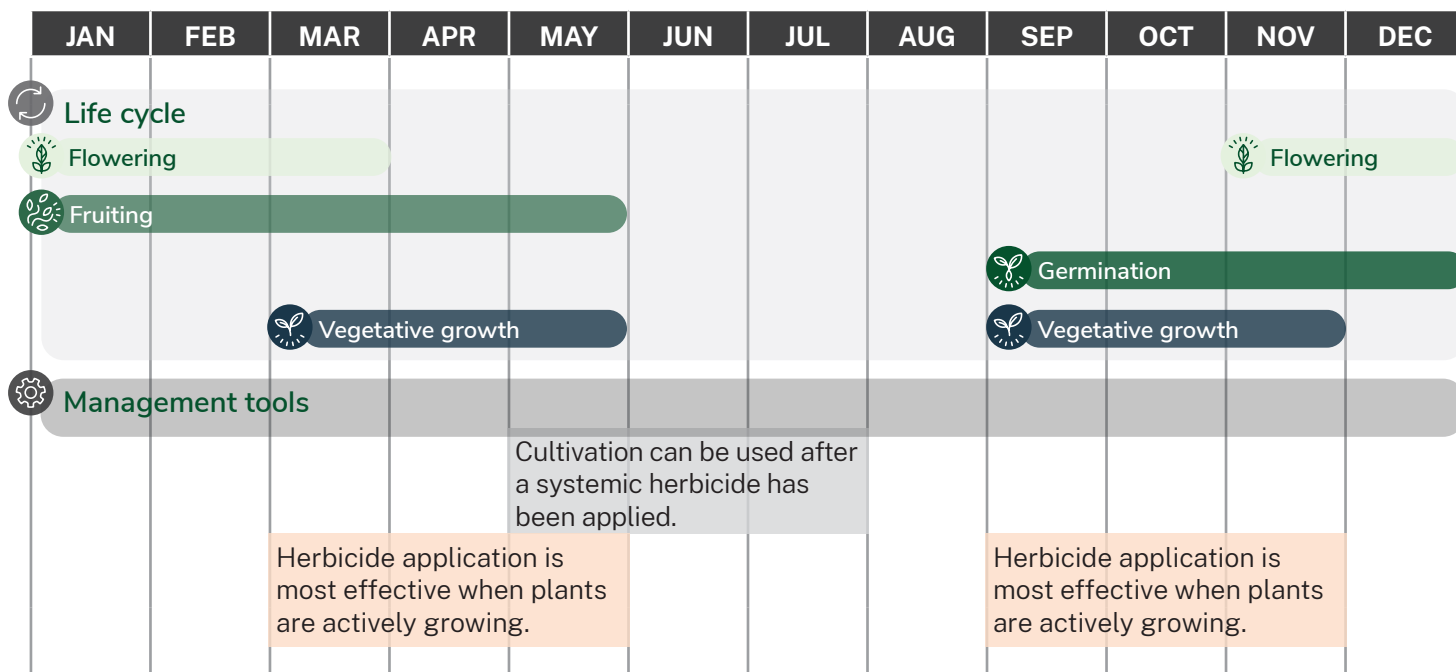


### Non-chemical

- Increased competition via good pasture establishment of summer perennial.
- Cultivation can be strategically used to stimulate germination to remove dormant seed bank.
- Prevention of spread by using proper machinery hygiene practices.
- Improving soil health can promote competitive pastures (NSW Local Land Services 2020).



# 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

NSW Local Land Services. (2020). *Weed Management Planning Guide: Blue heliotrope*. Local Land Services. [https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/1220929/280420-blue-heliotropev4.pdf](https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1220929/280420-blue-heliotropev4.pdf)

NSW DPI. (2021). *NSW WeedWise*. <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/blueheliotrope>



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