

# Seen this plant? Alligator Weed

*Alternanthera philoxeroides*



## How does this weed affect us?

Alligator weed is a perennial, stoloniferous plant that can grow both on land and in water. It is listed as a Weed of National Significance and poses one of the greatest threats to Australia's freshwater ecosystems. Within the Illawarra Alligator weed falls within the NSW Alligator weed Biosecurity zone and must be reported if found and eradicated if possible.

## ***Aquatic impacts***

- Alligator weed forms dense monocultures that outcompete native aquatic species, restrict water use, alter aquatic ecology, obstruct water flow and increase flooding and sedimentation.

## ***Terrestrial impacts***

- Alligator weed displaces pastures and contaminates crops, turf and soil. If grazed it can be toxic to livestock.

**Seen it? Call us:**

**NSW DPI Biosecurity Helpline**

**1800 680 244**

**Illawarra District Weeds Authority 02 4233 1129**

**Help protect our land, plants and wildlife.**

**For control and biosecurity information visit NSW WeedWise:**

**[weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/AlligatorWeed](https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/AlligatorWeed)**





### Where are you likely to find it?

Alligator weed is a native of South America, In the Illawarra it is occasionally found in wetland and riparian environments but also may be seen in urban steams and backyards.

### How does it spread?

Alligator weed does not produce viable seed in Australia. Reproduction is entirely vegetative with new plants able to occur at any stem or root node.

### What does it look like?

- Papery white ball like flowers grow at the end of single short stalks which rise from the leaf axils.
- Spear shaped dark green leaves grow in opposite pairs along the stems.
- Stems are hollow and may be single or branched. Stems can grow both horizontally or vertical.
- Alligator weed has an extensive underground root system comprising both taproot and filamentous roots.

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