

Gardening



ANNETTE McFARLANE



Penny Weed

What weed is that?

Love it or hate it—weed control is a regular task for all gardeners.

HAND WEEDING: I find hand weeding provides a therapeutic period of time out. It is satisfying to look back on what you have achieved after a few hours pulling weeds.



Easter Cassia

But some gardeners hate weeding and reach for chemicals in expectation of a miraculous result. Many are surprised that despite initial control, the weeds come back or new weeds take their place. It pays to remember that much repeated saying:

'One year's seeding means seven years weeding'.



Coral Berry

The soil is a reservoir of persistent weed seeds. Always control weeds before they flower as seeding soon follows. If you cannot weed at the time, at least mow or use a whipper-snipper to cut weeds down, before they shed thousands of seeds.

Preventing seed formation is particularly important with Easter cassia, coral berry; blue billy goat and onion weed.



Blue Billy Goat Weed

WEED MAT & MULCH:

Biodegradable weed mat and mulch are great weed control options in gardens and bark/gravel pathways.

Biodegradable weed matting is far superior to the old-fashioned, nylon matting. You can also smother weeds with wet cardboard; layers of wet newspaper six sheets thick or natural, compostable fabric (old cotton towels or moth-eaten wool blankets). These can be laid directly over the weeds before mulching with bark, cane mulch, tea tree or cypress pine mulch.



Yellow Weed

Yellow weed responds well to this treatment. Dig out clumps of onion weed before thickly smothering with matting/cardboard and mulch. Dig out and thickly mulch over tradescantia. You will not win first time round, but eventually will overcome this persistent weed.



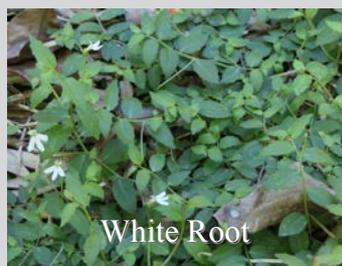
Onion Weed

Weeds seeds will germinate where weed matting and mulch are used because seeds blow in from other areas. However, they will be much easier to remove or re-smother.



Tradescantia

If you are worried about mulch attracting termites, remember wooden logs, bark and even potting mix can all attract termites. Even mulch materials not eaten by termites can provide cover for them to tunnel beneath. No mulch repels termites.



White Root

LAWN WEEDS: The hardest weeds to deal with are the ground hugging weeds that invade lawns (white root; yellow-flowered creeping oxalis, penny weed), plus those with tap roots (creeping indigo; sida).



Sida Weed

Lawn chemicals containing MCPA/Dicamba are registered for use on these and other broad leaf weeds, but repeated use is necessary. Children and pests must be kept from accessing sprayed lawns for the required with-holding period. If you cannot dig out the root of these weeds, an alternative is to lift as much of the mat of foliage and seeds as possible and cut it off at ground level.



Creeping Indigo

Place the equivalent of teaspoonful of high nitrogen lawn fertilizer directly on the cut section and any other remaining parts of the weed. (without watering in). The weed will be burnt out completely in a day or two, after which any remaining fertilizer can be watered into the lawn/garden.

ORGANIC HERBICIDES

HomeSafe, Slasher and Bioweed are organic herbicides that work well on paths and driveways and are useful for spot spraying in gardens. They will not control large, established tap-rooted weeds, but are useful in controlling small weed outbreaks once you have major weed outbreaks largely under control.

Cannot see your problem weed here? Check out these identification and control resources:

<https://weeds.brisbane.qld.gov.au/browse/weeds>

<https://weeds.org.au/identify>

<https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/biosecurity/invasive-plants-animals/plants-weeds/wons>