



Government
of South Australia

WEED IDENTIFICATION NOTES

ANIMAL AND PLANT CONTROL COMMISSION

FIELD BINDWEED



Closeup of flowers



Dense infestation

FIELD BINDWEED



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Field bindweed, *Convolvulus arvensis*, is a herbaceous perennial creeper introduced from Europe; it is also a widespread weed around the world. Because field bindweed is not easily controlled, it is important to keep it off clean properties and to destroy new infestations before they become established.

Distribution

Eyre Peninsula	- very isolated plants
Northern pastoral	- uncommon
Northern ag districts / Yorke Peninsula	- scattered
Murray Mallee	- scattered outbreaks
South East	- isolated in north, common in south
Central region	- scattered

Impacts

Field bindweed is a strong competitor for soil moisture during summer due to its deep extensive root system. By twining through crops it can also weigh them down and make harvesting difficult. These effects can result in substantial yield losses.

It is eaten by stock but of little fodder value and can cause photosensitisation or gastro-intestinal irritation. Field bindweed is a prolific seeder and its hard seed coat allows seeds to remain dormant in the soil for at least 20 years. It is a host for several vegetable pests and diseases and is allelopathic to some plants.

Recognition

A perennial creeper with a root system to 2 metres or deeper, prostrate along the ground or climbing up to 2 metres. The stems are green, branched and twine anticlockwise. Leaves are oblong to arrowhead-shaped, dark green and 2-5 cm long. The flowers grow from leaf axils in groups of 1-3; they are funnel-shaped, white to pale pink in colour, and 2-3 cm in diameter and length. Each flower lasts one day, and closes in dull light conditions. The fruits are dry capsules, rounded with a pointed end and contain 1-4 seeds, which are brown and round with two flattened sides.

Biology

Field bindweed grows readily on a range of soil types, situations and conditions and reproduces from seed and root fragments. Deep sandy soils are especially suitable. Seeds germinate throughout the year if adequate moisture is available but mainly spring and autumn. Plants grow rapidly in warmer weather, developing long stems with extensive root systems and sometimes flowering in their first year. The aboveground growth dies off in autumn with the beginning of cold weather. New growth from the roots occurs in spring, and the plants flower from late spring through summer. Seed set is variable and favoured by dry sunny conditions. Field bindweed does not survive waterlogged conditions.

Seeds are spread in contaminated fodder, grain and machinery, and internally by livestock. Cultivation will also spread root fragments, which readily form new plants, across paddocks.

Further Information:

Parsons, W.T., Cuthbertson, E.G. (2000). *Noxious Weeds of Australia*. 2nd ed. Inkata Press.

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For more advice on recognising and controlling field bindweed, contact your local Animal and Plant Control Board:



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