

Weed Sheet

Declared weed sheet : Bladder Champion



Government of South Australia
South Australian Murray-Darling Basin
Natural Resources Management Board

Bladder Champion

(*Silene vulgaris*)

Bladder champion is a 'difficult to kill' perennial plant which inhibits crop and pasture growth and can be spread by seed and root fragments in soil, on machinery, or as a contaminant of hay and seed.



Bladder Champion



What is it?

Bladder champion is a tap-rooted perennial, which is spread by seed and root fragments. It inhibits crop and pasture growth thus reducing yield and pasture productivity.

What does it look like?

Growth habit: Perennial herb up to 800mm high.

Leaves: Leaves are lance shaped, 30-80mm long, 10-30mm wide light green to whitish with a fine waxy/powdery coating.

Flowers: White petals protruding from a green bladder like tube (calyx), 15mm long, which is formed by united sepals.

Fruit: Brownish globular capsule enclosed within the persistent calyx.

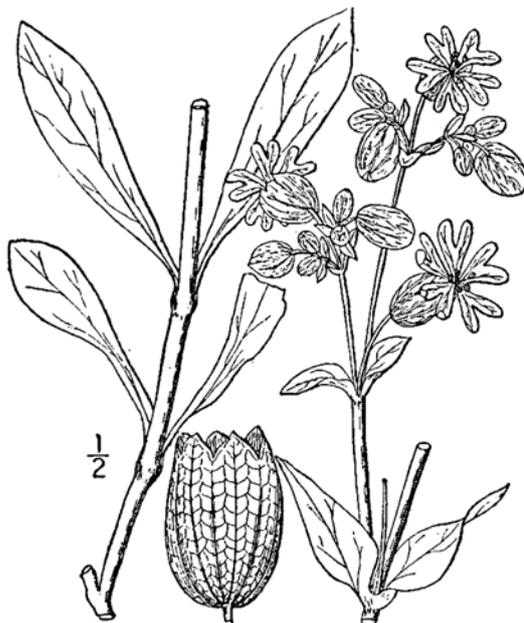
Root: Short thick root with creeping laterals.



Why is it a problem?

Bladder champion may germinate at any time of the year, although peak periods of germination are in spring and autumn. The majority of flowering usually occurs in spring to early summer.

Bladder champion is of particular concern for the crop/pasture land uses as the dense patches formed by the plant inhibit crop and pasture growth thus reducing yields and available pasture. The deep root system enables the plant to stay green and flowering, while many other plants have dried off. Anecdotal evidence suggests that it may be preferred by stock, particularly sheep, during this period.



Where is it found?

Bladder campion was first introduced into South Australia in the 1880's at Mount Gambier as an ornamental garden plant. Since then it has spread throughout the State with isolated infestations now in the Mallee and Yorke Peninsula regions.

Bladder campion can also be found in the cropping regions of New South Wales, Victoria and in isolated patches in northern Tasmania and southwest Western Australia.

How is it spread?

Bladder campion is primarily spread by seed. Wind scatters the seed from the capsule close to the parent plant; long distance dispersal is aided by seed transported in mud on the hooves of animals and machinery. Secondary means of spread is by movement of root fragments principally through cultivation. The seed may also be spread via contaminated seed and hay products.

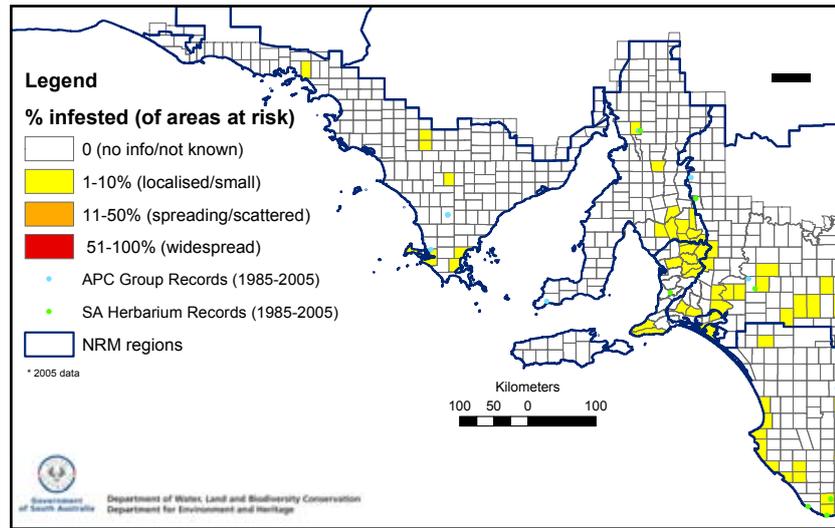
Bladder campion can increase in size and density through new growth forming from the lateral roots.

How do we control it?

Prevention: Bladder campion can be prevented from entering your property by ensuring your purchases of machinery, stock, fodder and seed are free of pest plants.

Physical control: Small infestations may be removed by hand or grubbing, although several treatments will be required to ensure that all viable plant material is removed.

Chemical control: Chemical control is the most effective means of controlling large infestations, although repeated applications will be required. Applications of Dicamba products prior to flowering are effective. If only spot spraying is required then repeated applications of Dicamba or Picloram + 2,4-D mixtures are effective, ensure that you always carefully read and follow the product label directions.



Infestation Level of BLADDER CAMPION (*Silene vulgaris*) by hundreds in the State of South Australia*

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
		1						1			
			2								

1) Peak Period 2) Growth supported by perennial rootstock

Yearly Weed Life Cycle of BLADDER CAMPION (*Silene vulgaris*) in the State of South Australia

Germination	Active growth
Flowering	Seed set

Biological control: Several biological control agents are being investigated overseas to aid in the reduction of Bladder campion, however no agents have yet been introduced into Australia.

For more advice on recognising and controlling Bladder campion, contact your local Natural Resources Management Board Officer.

References:

Parson, W. T., Cuthbertson, E. G., Noxious Weeds of Australia, 2nd Ed, 2001, CSIRO Publishing

Contact us



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Legislation

Bladder campion is declared under the Natural Resource Management (NRM) Act 2004.

Declared Plant Class: 2D
Declared Plant Category: 2

The following provisions of the NRM Act 2004 are to be applied to the whole of the State:

175(2) - relates to the movement of plants on public roads within a control area.

177(1)(2) - relates to the sale of plants, or produce or goods carrying plants.

182(2)(3) - relates to the obligation of an owner of land to control and keep controlled the plant and take any measures prescribed by the relevant authority.

185(1) - relates to the ability of the NRM authority to recover costs of control on roadsides from adjoining landholders.

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