

APB INFONOTE

FIELD BINDWEED

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1. Mature plant
2. Bindweed climbing oat stems
3. Flowers (Photo: GR Sainty)

FIELD BINDWEED

What you should know about field bindweed

Field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) is also known as morning glory and wild morning glory. It is a member of the sweet potato (Convolvulaceae) family. It is one of the most important weeds of the world. It originated in Europe and spread to become a major problem in North America, South Africa and New

Zealand. It has been established in Victoria since the 1890's. Occasional infestations have been found in Western Australia but it has not yet become widely established. Field bindweed is a declared plant (noxious weed) throughout Western Australia. It is illegal to grow it and any plants found must be destroyed.

Why field bindweed matters to you

Field bindweed is a nuisance in orchards and vineyards. It competes with crop plants for soil moisture and, to a lesser extent, for light. It tangles with cereal crops, weighing them down and interfering with harvesting. Field bindweed

has no feed value and may make stock vomit. You will find it difficult to control established plants due to regeneration from rhizomes (underground stems). Only seedlings and young plants are susceptible to herbicides.

What you should look for

- Field bindweed is a trailing prostrate twining plant.
- Stems are long, slender, pale-green in colour and branched. They grow up to 2 metres long.
- A taproot develops rapidly after germination and may penetrate to 3 m deep in suitable soils. Horizontal roots stay near the surface and produce buds which give rise to new stems.
- Leaves are arrow-shaped with rounded basal lobes and few hairs. They are arranged alternately on the stems.

- Flowers are white to pink, funnel-shaped and up to 3 cm in diameter. They have a long flower stalk. Flowers open in sunlight and close in shade.
- The fruit is a capsule that contains 2 to 4 grey-brown triangular seeds about 1 mm in length with a rough speckled coat.

Note:— A similar, native bindweed *Convolvulus erubescens* is sometimes found in the Geraldton area. The native plant has more slender leaves and often appearing grey-green due to a dense covering of short hairs. If in doubt get the plant identified. A similar creeper *Ipomaea purpurea* is often found in urban gardens.

Why field bindweed might succeed in WA

Field bindweed prefers deep, fertile alkaline soils and medium rainfall conditions, but will grow under a wide range of soils and climates. However it is quickly killed by waterlogging. Field bindweed is a perennial plant spreading from buds on underground stems (rhizomes) and by seeds. Spread within a paddock is by lateral growth and distribution of root fragments

by cultivation. Seeds are dispersed as a contaminant in crop seeds and animal manure. The seed has a hard coat which delays water absorption and may delay germination for up to 40 years. New plants germinate in the spring and flower during the summer. The foliage dies off in the autumn.

What you can do about it

Field bindweed has the potential to become a serious weed in Western Australia. Do your best to prevent its establishment here by

reporting any plants you find, adopting a long term control program and taking care to prevent it spreading to neighbouring properties.

Where to find out more

For further information on field bindweed contact the Agriculture Protection Board, Baron-Hay Court, South Perth 6151. Telephone (09) 368 3472 or the nearest country office of the APB or the Department of Agriculture.
