

Agapanthus

Agapanthus praecox

Family

Liliaceae (lily)

Also known as

Agapanthus orientalis

Where is it originally from?

South Africa

What does it look like?

Robust, clump-forming perennial with long, thick, white rhizomes. Leathery, arching leaves (20-70 x 2-6 cm) with watery sap grow from the base in clumps of up to 20. Umbrella-shaped clusters (7 x 5 cm) of many small, purplish-blue or white flowers are produced from December to February, followed by thin, papery, black seeds.

Are there any similar species?

Native rengarenga lily is similar in leaf form, but has paler leaves and white flowers.

Why is it weedy?

Prolific seeder, dispersing effectively and germinating densely. Long-lived, and tolerates hot or cold temperatures, wet or drought conditions, wind, salt, poor soils, moderate-shade, heavy damage, and sea immersion of rhizomes and seeds.

How does it spread?

Seeds blows short distances, fall down banks and are also carried in flowing water. Seed and root fragments are also spread in contaminated soil, dumped vegetation and deliberate planting. Commonly found in gardens, roadsides and banks.

What damage does it do?

Forms pure stands, excluding all other species and becoming the dominant species almost everywhere it grows. It causes massive biodiversity loss, especially of rare coastal herb, grass and shrub species.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Most coastal sites, banks, cliffs, gumland, consolidated sand, fernland, shrubland, and bush margins.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Dig out scattered plants. Dispose of corms and root fragments at a refuse transfer station or dry them out and burn them. Usually follow up with spraying.
2. Spray overall: metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (4g) + glyphosate (200ml) + penetrant per 10L water.
3. Cut down and paint stump: slash leaves close to ground, leave on site to rot down. Treat freshly cut bases with metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (1g) + glyphosate (50ml) + penetrant per 1L water or a 3-5mm layer of picloram gel.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Plants often resprout and seed bank reinfests bared sites thickly, so follow up frequently until eradicated. At least 3-4 follow up treatments are needed. Begin eradication at top of banks and work down. Don't replant until after 2-3 treatments.



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Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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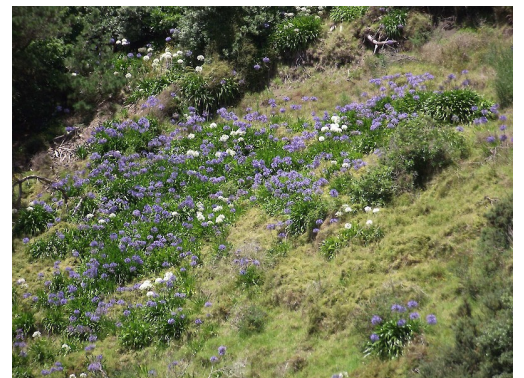


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