

Sexton's bride

Rhaphiolepis umbellata

Family

Rosaceae (rose) family

Also known as

Indian hawthorn, Yeddo hawthorn

Where is it originally from?

Japan, Korea

What does it look like?

Small, slow-growing, dense, rounded evergreen shrub with oval shaped, alternate, simple, glossy, leathery dark green leaves (<10 cm long). Clusters of up to 20 fragrant white flowers (2-3cm wide), with pink/red stamens and sepals, appear at the end of stems from July-Dec, and are followed by small fleshy purple-black to bluish black fruit (0.6-1.2 mm across) containing seeds.

Are there any similar species?

There are several cultivars which look similar.

Why is it weedy?

Tolerant of salt spray, wind and drought, it grows well in coastal areas. Forms thick stands that crowd out other species.

How does it spread?

Seed-containing fruit falls close to parent plants, and birds spread seed further afield.

What damage does it do?

Competes with and replaces native plants, especially in coastal areas.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Coastal cliffs, shrubland, and forest. Tolerates very hard dry soils, but doesn't colonise damp sites. Often an escapee from old hedges and gardens. Also found in transport corridors.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Pull out small seedlings and either leave on site to rot or mulch
2. Cut and stump paint larger plants with herbicide gel (glyphosate, metsulfuron or picloram).

CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and directions for the purchase, use and storage of the product, are followed and adhered to.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Check for seedlings and remove.



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Photo: Trevor James



Photo: Sheldon Navie



Photo: Carolyn Lewis