

## Woody Weeds in the City of Bunbury

### What is a woody weed?

A woody weed is a tree, shrub or large climber that has established within an area outside its natural range. Woody weeds can be exotic species, such as Brazilian Pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), native to subtropical and tropical South America, or a native species occurring outside its natural range, such as the Sydney Golden Wattle (*Acacia longifolia*), native to the eastern states of Australia.

Woody weeds are generally fast growers, mature early, produce an abundance of seed, readily germinate in a variety of conditions and are very resilient. Some woody weeds form dense stands or can grow at a high density and some can regrow after felling. Some even produce toxins to inhibit the growth of other plants.

### Why are they a problem?

Woody weeds can have a negative impact on the structure and diversity of bushland areas. Weedy trees and shrubs may form dense stands that crowd out native plants. This can lead to the local extinctions of native species, increased fire fuel loads and significant alteration to fauna habitats. The alteration of habitat and potential loss of food sources can result in a decrease in animal diversity in the affected area.

### How do they spread?

Most woody weeds were introduced as forestry species or landscaping plants. After the plants were deliberately introduced, seeds were dispersed to new areas by wind, water and animals. Dumping of garden waste into bushland also introduces weed species. The waste material doesn't need to have seed material in it to introduce weed species; several invasive weeds can re-sprout from rhizomes or tubers (root structures).

### What can you do to help?

- Do not dump garden waste in bush areas. Dumping of waste is illegal and can be prosecuted under the *Western Australian Environmental Protection Act 1986* and under the *Litter Act 1979*. If you see anyone dumping rubbish, immediately report them by phoning the Customer Service Centre (08) 9792 7000,
- When choosing plants for a garden, opt for local native species.





## Common Woody Weeds in the City of Bunbury



**Sydney Golden Wattle** (*Acacia longifolia*)  
**Family:** Fabaceae (Pea)

**Description:** Large shrub to small tree up to 8 m, grows as a large wide bushy shrub, smooth grey bark, yellow rod shaped flowers July to September, long narrow drooping seed pods.

*Image Source:* City of Bunbury



**Brazilian Pepper** (*Schinus terebinthifolius*)  
**Family:** Anacardiaceae (Cashew)

**Description:** Sprawling shrub or tree growing to 10 m, flowers white in auxiliary clusters from February to March, fruit is a small red drupe in dense clusters, produces basal shoots if the trunk is cut.

*Image Source:* Natural Area Holdings Pty Ltd



**Castor Oil Plant** (*Ricinus communis*)  
**Family:** Euphorbiaceae (Spurge)

**Description:** Fast growing perennial shrub, growing to the size of a small tree (5 m), flowers cream/yellow to red from June to September, fruit is spiny and the seed contains the toxin ricin.

*Image Source:* Natural Area Holdings Pty Ltd



**Flinders Wattle** (*Acacia iteaphylla*)  
**Family:** Fabaceae (Pea)

**Description:** Fast growing, large shrub to 5 m, leaves are silvery blue-green, yellow flowers produced in clusters from March to September, seed pods are flattened and brown when mature

*Image Source:* Natural Area Holdings Pty Ltd

