



Government
of South Australia

Declared Plant Policy

This policy relates to natural resources management under section 9(1)(d) of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act), enabling co-ordinated implementation and promotion of sound management programs and practices for the use, development or protection of natural resources of the State. Specifically, this policy provides guidance on the use and management of natural resources relating to the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community, as per object s7(1)(f) of the Act.

flax-leaf broom (*Genista linifolia*)

Flax-leaf broom is a shrub that forms dense thickets, excluding native vegetation and providing cover for rabbits. It was introduced to Australia as an ornamental and hedge plant and is a weed of native vegetation in the Hills and Fleurieu region and some coastal localities. It resembles Cape broom (*Genista monspessulana*), which is the subject of a separate policy.

Management Plan for Flax-leaf broom

Outcomes

- Maintain the integrity of native vegetation.

Objectives

- High priority infestations of flax-leaf broom in the control areas controlled.
- No further spread of flax-leaf broom to currently uninfested areas.

Best Practice Implementation

- Regional landscape boards in the active control areas and Green Adelaide to ensure high priority infestations on private or public land are controlled.
- Regional landscape boards and Green Adelaide to control priority infestations on road reserves.
- Regional landscape boards, Green Adelaide and the Chief Executive of the Department for Environment and Water to enforce the prohibition on sale of flax-leaf broom.

Regional Implementation

Refer to regional management plans for further details.

flax leaf broom policy

Region	Actions
Alinytjara Wilurara	Prohibit sale and movement
Eyre Peninsula	Manage weed
Green Adelaide	Manage weed
Hills and Fleurieu	Manage weed
Kangaroo Island	Manage weed
Limestone Coast	Manage weed
Murraylands and Riverland	Manage weed
Northern and Yorke	Manage weed
South Australian Arid Lands	Prohibit sale and movement

Declaration

To implement this policy, flax-leaf broom is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* throughout the whole of the State of South Australia. Its movement or transport on a public road, by itself or as a contaminant, or sale by itself or as a contaminant are prohibited. The Eyre Peninsula, Hills and Fleurieu, Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murraylands and Riverland, and Northern and Yorke Landscape Boards, and Green Adelaide, may require land owners to control flax-leaf broom plants growing on their land. These authorities required to control plants on road reserves in their regions, and may recover costs from the adjoining land owners.

Flax-leaf broom is declared in category 2 under the Act for the purpose of setting maximum penalties under section 177. Any permit to allow its road transport or sale can only be issued by the Chief Executive, DEW or their delegate pursuant to section 197.

Under the *Landscape South Australia (General) Regulations 2020*, Regulation 27 specifies the conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 186 and may transport wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying flax-leaf broom on public roads. Regulation 28 specifies conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 188(2) and may sell wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying flax-leaf broom. Note that certain produce or goods may be excluded from these general movement and sale exemptions by Gazettal Notice of the Chief Executive, DEW.

The following sections of the Act apply to flax-leaf broom throughout each of the regions noted below:

Region	AW	EP	GA	HF	KI	LC	MR	NY	SAAL
Sections of Act									
186(1) Prohibiting entry to area									
186(2) Prohibiting movement on public roads	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(1) Prohibiting sale of the plant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(2) Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
190 Requiring notification of presence									
192(1) Landowners to destroy the plant on their properties									
192(2) Landowners to control the plant on their properties		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 2025, or in the event of a change in one or more regional management plans for flax-leaf broom.

Weed Risk

Invasiveness

Flax-leaf broom is a leguminous shrub that grows rapidly after the first year and produces large quantities of hard seed. Plants develop slowly during the first year and do not flower until at least two years old.

Seed is scattered locally when the pods burst. It has been estimated that most seeds would be ejected around 20 m. Longer distance dispersal may occur by road graders and earthmoving equipment, or occasional contamination of fodder and farm machinery. Infestations are only found in regions where flax-leaf broom has been used as an ornamental.

Germination occurs in autumn and spring after the seed coat has been damaged by fire or abrasion. Disturbance, such as fire or partial clearing, is usually needed before flax-leaf broom can establish in native vegetation, and most infestations begin on disturbed areas such as timber plantations, quarries and road construction sites.

Impacts

Flax-leaf broom is primary an environmental weed as it invades dry coastal vegetation, heath land and heathy woodland, grassy woodland, dry sclerophyll forest and woodland, damp sclerophyll forest and riparian vegetation. It can dominate the shrub canopy and grow to 3 metres high and wide, excluding native shrubs and ground flora, at least in the short term. It fixes atmospheric nitrogen and consequently increases nitrogen levels in the soil, providing a favourable habitat for other weeds to invade. Dense infestations provide harbour for rabbits and foxes, and increase fire fuel-loads in native vegetation and neglected pasture areas. In turn, fire stimulates seed germination by breaking the dormancy of soil-stored seed resulting in dense infestations of seedlings.

In neglected pasture, flax-leaf broom can spread rapidly and displace pasture species. It is considered toxic to stock if grazed excessively, but in Australia no cases of poisoning have been reported. Although stock will eat seedlings and thereby prevent encroachment into managed pasture, old broom infestations on neglected land can exclude stock and necessitate more expensive control measures to restore the land to production. The dense thickets can become a significant barrier to humans, machinery and animals.

Flax-leaf broom is a fire hazard in wooded areas where it can form an inflammable understorey at the edge of forests where fires are most likely to start. The infestation of abandoned grazing paddocks on the peri urban fringe by flax-leaf broom thickets is also a fire hazard that increases the risk of bushfires moving into residential suburbs.

Potential distribution

Flax-leaf broom is adapted to Mediterranean climates and slightly acid soils in areas of moderate rainfall. In South Australia, infestations occur in areas receiving 400 mm to 900 mm annual rainfall. It could be expected to grow in near-coastal and hill vegetation from southern Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, Fleurieu Peninsula and Mount Lofty Ranges to the lower Limestone Coast.

Feasibility of Containment

Control costs

A small percentage of seeds are not dormant and are capable of germinating immediately on exposure to suitable temperature and soil moisture conditions. This variation in seed dormancy and germination increases the difficulty of control.

Herbicide control is possible with picloram herbicides being registered for use. Other options for control includes browsing plant with goats, hand pulling small plants when soil is moist, burning adult plants, stem injection or cut stump treatment and cultivation.

Persistence

While mature plants are often killed by fire, the plant regenerates prolifically from soil-stored seed after fire. Tolerant of drought and water logging.

Current distribution

Flax-leaf broom is scattered in the Mount Lofty Ranges and Fleurieu Peninsula. A large infestation occurs near Clare, and at least one small one in the Port Lincoln area. It is also established in Western Australia, Victoria, NSW and Tasmania.

State Level Risk Assessment

Assessment using the Biosecurity SA Weed Risk Management System gave the following comparative weed risk and feasibility of containment scores by land use:

Land use	Weed Risk	Feasibility of control	Response at State Level
Native vegetation	medium 77	high 24	Protect sites

Considerations

Flax-leaf broom is native to the western Mediterranean; it was introduced to SA as a garden shrub in 1858 and was first recorded as naturalised in 1903.

Risk assessment indicates the action of site protection in native vegetation. While sale and movement are prohibited uniformly across the State, regional actions vary according to the presence of the weed and the amount of vulnerable native vegetation in each region. The four regions where it is known to occur, Eyre Peninsula, Green Adelaide, Hills and Fleurieu, and Northern and Yorke, aim to manage the weed as do the Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast and Murraylands and Riverland regions, which have habitats vulnerable to invasion by flax leaf broom.

Flax-leaf broom has been recognised as a Weed of National Significance and is the subject of a national control strategy.

Synonymy

Genista linifolia L., Sp. Pl., ed. 2. 1: 405 (1762).

Nomenclatural synonyms:

Cytisus linifolius (L.) Lam., Fl. Francoise 2 (1778).

Teline linifolia (L.) Webb & Berthel., Hist. Nat. des Iles Canaries 3(2.2) (1842).

Taxonomic synonyms:

Teline gomerae (P.E.Gibbs & Dingwall) Kunkel, Cuad. Bot. Canaria 25: 40.(1975).

Teline rosmarinifolia Webb & Berthel., Hist. Nat. Iles Canaries (Phytogr.) 2: 43. t. 44.

References

Office of Environment and Heritage (2014) Broom Management Manual: Current management and control options for Scotch (*Cytisus scoparius*), Montpellier (*Genista monspessulana*) and flax-leaf (*G. linifolia*) brooms in Australia.

Hon David Speirs MP

Minister for Environment and Water

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