

Hunter Region Priority Weed

African olive

Invades bush and pastures



Management guide



In NSW, weeds are regulated by the *NSW Biosecurity Act 2015*. All land managers have a General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) to contain the spread of weeds.

“General Biosecurity Duty means that any person dealing with plant matter must take measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate the biosecurity risk (as far as is reasonably practicable).”

The Regional priority is the removal of all African Olive plants outside the core areas of Maitland and Singleton. In order to achieve this, Land Managers are asked to:

- Mitigate the risk of new weeds being introduced to their land.
- Mitigate spread of the weed from their land.

The plant should not be bought, sold, grown, carried or released into the environment.

For further information contact your local Weeds Officer via [Hunter Regional Weeds](#) or visit [NSW WeedWise](#).

Impacts

African olive is a serious weed in many parts of the Hunter Region.

- African olive is an invasive environmental weed in the Central Hunter region, particularly concentrated in Maitland and Singleton Local Government Areas.
- This aggressive woody weed readily invades native bush land and takes over pastures on farms. Also found in towns.
- A small to medium tree, matures and produces viable fruit at five years and grows up to 15 m high.
- Forms thickets which create a dense shady canopy that excludes the growth of native understorey plants, and pasture species.
- Very long-lived, can be more than 100 years, permanently changes the plant diversity and structure of bushland.

- The small black fruits are eaten by birds and foxes and spread into nearby areas.
- Often found growing along fence lines and under taller trees, wherever birds roost.
- Grows on most soils and tolerates moist spots, as well as dry rocky hillsides.
- Harbours pest animals, such as rabbits, foxes, wild dogs and pest bird species.
- Can present a fire hazard.
- It is related to the edible European olive, however the fruit is not edible.
- Not to be confused with Native olive, a similar plant at first glance.

Management

- Remove any seedlings as soon as possible.
- Outside the core area of Singleton and Maitland all plants should be destroyed.
- Many infestations of African olive are long-standing and need careful management to revegetate well after removal.
- Seedlings and fresh regrowth may be sprayed.
- Seedlings can be hand pulled. Larger plants quickly develop a large root system and are difficult to remove by hand.
- Basal bark, cut stump or stem injection are currently the most reliable herbicide treatments to control mature plants.
- Regrowth from stumps is likely. Monitor closely for complete control.
- Mechanical removal by heavy equipment of the entire root system can be effective. This method may worsen erosion, take care on sloping sites and riparian areas. Monitor seedling regrowth after removal.
- Seed viability is only a few years so monitoring and early removal is vital to eliminate this weed in areas where it is being controlled.
- Revegetate treated areas with native grasses, native trees and shrubs, or pasture species on farms. Again, monitor closely to control seedling regrowth.

Identification



African olive flowers.
Photo: John Hosking



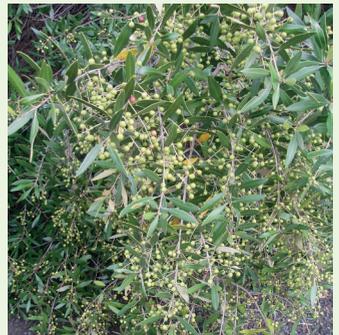
African olive fruit, showing stages of ripening from green to black. Fruit is inedible but readily spread by birds. European olive fruit is much larger.
Photo: John Hosking



Established infestation of African olive on a hillside in farm grazing land.
Photo: L Adlem



African olive infestation. Often colonises first under birds roost trees.
Photo: John Hosking



African olive fruits prolifically. Birds and animals spread the seed readily.
Photo: L Adlem

Management Calendar

The calendar below outlines the management approach for a typical year.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Growth stage			Fruit matures.						Flowering.			
Action	Mechanical removal possible at any time. Take care on sloping and riparian sites not to cause or worsen erosion. Monitor for regrowth.											
	With good care, re-establish pasture species at any suitable time.											
			Best time for revegetation with native shrubs and grasses.									
	Best time for herbicide control before fruit set.		Winter herbicide treatment using basal bark application possible - will take longer to take effect.						Best time for herbicide control before fruit set.			

Recommended control options may vary according to your area. There are experienced professional Weeds Officers based in each Local Government Area who have local knowledge and can provide expert advice for your weed management situation. Contact your expert Weeds Officer at your local Council or at Hunter Regional Weeds.

Herbicide control options for all areas in NSW, including current herbicide registrations, are available for African olive at <http://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Details/4>.

Remember that all herbicide must be used and handled in accordance with the label or permit.

<https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/AfricanOlive>



Get the WeedWise app

Further information

For further information on how to meet your General Biosecurity Duty on your property, your best source is the expert Weeds Officer at your local Council or via Hunter Regional Weeds.

Contact Hunter Regional Weeds

www.hunterregionalweeds.net.au

Hunter Local Land Services

www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au

NSW Weed Wise

www.weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au



African olive (left) and European olive (right). Note the colour differences. *Photo: John Hosking*

