

EDUCATOR NOTES:

Understanding weeds: [life cycle](#) and [investigation](#)

Learning and Engagement Approach

This sequence is comprised of 2 individual learning activities, including:

- life cycle: children will be learning about flowering plant life cycles and weeds
- investigation: children will be assessing their local environment for weeds.

This activity sequence is designed to engage young learners aged from 7 – 13 years.

The activity is intended to:

- engage children in hands-on investigations to understand what weeds they have in their local area
- value weed removal as important in maintaining biodiversity and agricultural productivity
- appreciate how quickly weeds can become a problem
- value the work of local weed experts, Landcarers and Indigenous knowledge.

Safety Considerations

- Check the weather before conducting any outdoors activity. If there is going to be extreme temperatures, storms or high wind, postpone the activity.
- Ensure that everyone is wearing closed shoes, hats, and sunscreen and has a water bottle handy
- Check the site beforehand if possible for hazards.
- Keep any allergy plan information at hand and any associated allergy medication.
- Avoid touching plants to reduce of risk of cuts or potential allergies.
- Check the Australian Government Health Direct website for more information on [pollen allergies](#) (e.g. Parthenium weed can stimulate asthma).

Materials and References

ONLINE RESOURCES

[Weeds Australia](#) is a national database to search for weeds in Australia, this includes reference to [Weeds of National Significance in Australia](#). Look at the [Impact of weeds](#) on the environment, agriculture and human health. The [Weed Identification Tool](#) helps you to identify your weed by flower colour, plant form and location.

NSW Department of Primary Industry has some information on [weeds](#), along with [best practice weed management guides](#).

Australian Native Plants Society has a series of information sheets about [Environmental Weeds in Australia](#).

PRINTABLE RESOURCES

These educational resources will help support weed activities in your setting:

Print out or use online this series of stories about [pest plants](#) from EnviroStories that are written by children and all contain some pictorial facts on local weeds.

[Misbehaving plants](#) from the University of New England is a visual PDF that includes some weed definitions and activities.

[Future Farming - Weed Warriors Teachers Resource](#) from Agriculture Victoria introduces activities and the Weed Warrior program for schools for students from Year 3 – Year 10.

The [Weedbusters](#) publication from Gould League provides a range of activities on learning about weeds.

Enviro-Stories shares stories through students telling their own stories; explore these stories about [pest plants](#).

APPS

From some states and territories to help you identify and report weeds in your location.

NSW

The [NSW WeedWise](#) App provides information on over 300 weed species.

QLD

The [Weed Spotter App](#) from the Weed Spotters Network Queensland allows you to email photographs of plants to the Queensland Herbarium.

SA

The [SA Weed Control App](#) provides essential information about the control of weeds declared under legislation in South Australia.

WATCH

In this [video](#) from ABC Education, find out about introduced plants (weeds) at Merri Creek, that are impacting this natural habitat. (3 minutes 30)

Sustainable Gardening Australia offers this entertaining video on how to manage weeds in [Weeds, not in my backyard](#) (5 minutes)

Learn about the [Coastal Weeds Project](#) with the Far South Coast Landcare Association (6 minutes 30).

[Keeping Country healthy in Kakadu National Park](#) from the Northern Australia Environmental Resources Hub describes how science researchers collaborate with Bininj/Mungguy Traditional Owners to develop and apply Bininj/Mungguy indicators of cultural-ecosystem health, and use this to identify priority areas for targeted Para Grass weed control. (4 minutes 15)

Learn about a range of Wicked Weeds' from central Queensland and how to control them from student Ivy Schmidt in this [video](#) from Landcare Australia. (9 minutes 44)

Site Suggestions

Weeds can be easier to observe in unmown grassy patches or in garden areas where there has been less regular maintenance activity. It is easier to locate weeds after wet weather.

Educator Tips

This activity can be integrated with the development of a habitat, food or Indigenous plant-use garden, revegetation project or investigation of your local environment.

- Identify the plants that are in your garden and replace those that are invasive with non - invasive species. Contact your local community nursery, landcare group, Local Traditional owners and Aboriginal community groups or local government weeds officer for advice on appropriate native species.
- Discuss the benefits of becoming involved in and forming Junior Landcare, Landcare, Bushcare, and Coastcare groups to tackle weeds on public land.
- Community connections will help control you weed spread. If you do locate weeds report them to your local authorities to find out appropriate removal methods.
- Local weed experts can be found in government or community groups. Try to find a: council environment officer, state or territory government weeds officer, volunteer from a local group (e.g. Landcare or 'Friends of' group), regional weed strategy coordinator.

Aligning this Activity

- Creating a wildlife habitat: [research](#), [vision](#), [design](#), [planting](#), and [monitoring and care](#)

Extension Activities

Life cycle

Extension 1

Come up with a strategy to remove weeds that you explored in this activity.

Extension 2

Use online resources or field guides to research a weed and create your own information sheet.

Investigation

Extension 1

Choose a weed from your investigation or local area and explore its impacts and how it can be managed locally. Use this information to create a 'Wanted' poster for your weed. Consider ways you can convince others to help find and control this weed.

Extension 2

Research local Indigenous land management practices in your area by reaching out to the Local Traditional owners and Aboriginal community groups who can assist in knowledge sharing and understanding local land. What practices would help with controlling weeds in your local area?

Community Engagement

Use [The National Landcare Directory](#) to find a community environmental 'care' group near you. Landcare groups are highly experienced in managing weeds in local environments.

Look to the [Junior Landcare Community Page](#) for organisations to contact to help support your plant growing activities.

Use this [Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network map](#) to find a City Farm or Community Garden near you to get some advice on weed management

Curriculum and Framework Links

SCIENCE

Year 2: [ACSSU030](#), [ACSHE035](#)

Year 3: [ACSSU044](#), [ACSIS054](#)

Year 4: [ACSHE062](#), [ACSIS064](#)

Year 5: [ACSHE083](#), [ACSSU043](#)

Year 6: [ACSSU094](#)

Year 7: [ACSHE120](#)

Year 8: [ACSHE135](#)

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Year 2: [ACHASSI042](#)

Year 3: [ACHASSI052](#), [ACHASSI060](#)

Year 4: [ACHASSK088](#), [ACHASSK090](#)

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES

Year 7 & 8: [ACTDEK032](#)

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Year 2: [ACPPS018](#)

Year 3 & 4: [ACPPS041](#)

Year 5 & 6: [ACPPS059](#)

Year 7 & 8: [ACPPS078](#)

ETHICAL UNDERSTANDING

[Exploring values, rights and responsibilities](#)

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY

[Social awareness](#)

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

[Outdoor Learning](#)

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY

[Social awareness](#)

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITY

[Sustainability](#)

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures](#)

MY TIME, OUR PLACE: FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL AGE CARE

[Outcome 2 and 4](#)