

Assessing weed risk at the local scale

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Summary Determining the risk posed by a potential environmental weed is generally very time consuming. To assist public land managers, the Victorian Government has compiled the Victorian Weed Risk Assessment scores and the ratings from the Environmental Weed Advisory lists into one database, called the *Victorian Environmental Weed Risk Database*. This Excel file has a number of active worksheets. It can be used by land managers to compile a weed list for their patch and then compare scores and ratings for different species. If none is available, the land manager can use the *Environmental Weed Risk Screen* to determine whether the plant should be surveyed to determine its extent or if it should simply be monitored.

The screen was developed to assess the risk posed by a plant that has been either newly detected, or

has been known to be present for some time but has never been assessed. It has been designed to identify the plants that pose the highest threat to biodiversity, particularly at the local scale, e.g. national park, conservation reserve, State forest.

By sorting the spreadsheet compiled for the specific public land parcel, the manager can start to both prioritize weeds (based on the comparative risk they pose) and determine what species should be delimited. The database is one part of a decision making framework for early invaders, developed by the *Weeds at the Early Stage of Invasion* project, and available at www.delwp.vic.gov.au/early-invaders.

Keywords Early invaders, environmental weeds, invasive species, risk assessments, risk ratings, risk screen.