

# Dutchman's pipe

*Aristolochia elegans*



Dutchman's pipe is an environmental weed that is widely promoted as an unusual, easily cultivated ornamental plant. Dutchman's pipe is a popular novelty in gardens and suburban backyards and has naturalised in several areas of Queensland and northern New South Wales. Dutchman's pipe has a preference for moist, fertile soils making it a prime invader of rainforest habitat.

Dutchman's pipe is similar to the natives *Pararistolochia praevenosa* (formerly known as *Aristolochia praevenosa*) and *Aristolochia acuminata* (formerly known as *Aristolochia tagala*), which are natural food plants for a number of Australian butterflies.



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Dutchman's pipe however is a deadly alternative, tricking butterflies into laying their eggs on its leaves, and then poisoning the larvae when they hatch and begin to feed.

The survival of the rare Richmond birdwing butterfly (*Ornithoptera richmondia*) is threatened by this occurrence. Never plant this species in your garden. Consider using the native species in your garden instead.

## Legal requirements

Dutchman's pipe is a category 3 restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. It must not be given away, sold, or released into the environment. The Act requires everyone to take all reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks associated with invasive plants under their control. This is called a general biosecurity obligation (GBO). This fact sheet gives examples of how you can meet your GBO.

At a local level, each local government must have a biosecurity plan that covers invasive plants in its area. This plan may include actions to be taken on Dutchman's pipe. certain species. Some of these actions may be required under local laws. Contact your local government for more information.

## Description

Dutchman's pipe is a fast-growing vine. The common name arose from the distinctive flowers that are shaped like a traditional Dutchman's pipe. These flowers are strikingly coloured reddish-purple and marked with white and yellow.

Leaves are up to 75 mm long, glossy green and heart-shaped, growing closely to form a dense mat of foliage.

The woody stems are slender and twine tightly in coils around any supporting structure.

## Life cycle

Flowering occurs mostly in the summer with seed set late summer.

## Methods of spread

Mostly spread by humans, also by wind, water and gravity.

## Habitat and distribution

Native to South America (i.e. Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Argentina).

Primarily a weed of rainforests, closed forests, urban bushland, disturbed sites, roadsides, waste areas, waterways and forest margins in tropical and sub-tropical regions. It is also a potential invasive plant of plantation crops.

Dutchman's pipe is naturalised in the eastern parts of Australia, where it is relatively widespread.

It is common in the coastal districts of southern and central Queensland, scattered in the coastal areas of northern Queensland, and sparingly naturalised in the north-eastern corner of New South Wales (i.e. near Casino). Also naturalised on Christmas Island.

Widely naturalised in the tropical regions of the world (e.g. Zimbabwe, South Africa, Hawaii, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Fiji, the Cook Islands and south-eastern USA). Suspected of poisoning livestock.

Also considered a problem in Australia as birdwing butterflies, *Ornithoptera priamus* and *Ornithoptera richmondii*, lay eggs on this plant in mistake for their native *Aristolochia* and *Pararistolochia* hosts. Eggs hatch but larvae are unable to develop on Dutchman's pipe.

## Control

### Managing Dutchman's pipe

The GBO requires a person to take reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks posed by Dutchman's pipe. This fact sheet provides information and some options for controlling Dutchman's pipe.

### Physical control

Manual removal may be the only suitable method of control available for this invasive plant. Small plants can be pulled or dug out, ensuring that the crown and the roots are removed.

Vigorous growth may be cut down using a brush hook or other such tool, preferably before seeds set. Trace vines to their main crown and cut with a knife well below this growing point, removing all parts of the plant from the soil.

### Herbicide control

There are no herbicide products specifically registered for the control of Dutchman's pipe in Queensland. However, a permit held by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries allows people generally to use some herbicide products to control Dutchman's pipe as an environmental weed in various situations. See Table 1 for the treatment options in situations allowed by the permit.

Prior to using the herbicides listed under this permit (PER11463) you must read or have read to you and understand the conditions of the permit. To obtain a copy of this permit visit [apvma.gov.au](http://apvma.gov.au).

## More information

For more information contact your local government or visit [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au).



**Table 1. Herbicides for the control of Dutchman’s pipe**

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Registration details	Comments
Non-agricultural areas, domestic and public service areas, commercial and industrial areas, bushland/native forests, roadsides, rights-of-way, vacant lots, wastelands, wetlands, dunal and coastal areas	Glyphosate 360 g/L (e.g. Weedmaster Duo)	1 part product to 2 parts water (e.g. 10 mL in 20 mL water)	APVMA permit PER11463 (Permit expires 30/04/2027)	<b>Cut stump</b> Apply in spring Apply second application if necessary
	Glyphosate 360 g/L (e.g. Weedmaster Duo)	10 mL per 1 L water		<b>Foliar application</b> Apply up to twice a year Apply only when the supporting plant and under-storey is dead Apply early autumn (March-April) Do not spray beyond the point of run-off

Consult the table and formulae at the end of PER11463 for rates for other formulations of glyphosate.  
**Read the label carefully before use. Always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.**

