

# Zebrina

*Tradescantia zebrina*



Zebrina is a trailing ground cover plant native to Mexico, and cultivated for its coloured foliage.

As a garden plant, zebrina is commonly found growing rampantly in untended areas or areas that are difficult to access (steep banks, undergrowth etc.).

Zebrina's ability to thrive and spread without assistance has enabled it to escape gardens and invade disturbed areas of bushland, where it forms thick carpets of growth, smothering native ground cover vegetation.

Zebrina will spread across shady or damp areas, preventing the establishment of other vegetation. Zebrina has the capacity to invade natural vegetation across south-east Queensland. Zebrina is currently an invasive environmental weed in coastal Queensland.

## Legal requirements

Zebrina is not a prohibited or restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. However, by law, everyone has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks associated with invasive plants under their control.

Local governments must have a biosecurity plan that covers invasive plants in their area. This plan may include actions to be taken on certain species. Some of these actions may be required under local laws. Contact your local government for more information.



## Description

Zebrina is closely related to wandering jew (*Tradescantia albiflora*), and looks similar except that the sheath at the base of the zebrina leaf is hairy.

Zebrina is a ground cover weed with weak trailing stems. Stems are tinged purple, hairless and readily form roots at their nodes. Leaves are zebra patterned with the upper surface showing purple new growth and green older growth parallel to the central axis, as well as two broad silver-colored stripes on the outer edges, with the lower

leaf surface presenting a deep uniform purple 3–7 cm long. Flowers have three bright pink petals, 10–12 mm long, appearing at the end of stems. Fruit when present are small capsules with 1–2 seeds. Seeds greyish brown and finely wrinkled.

Zebrina flowers mainly in spring–summer. Reproduces and spreads from stem and root fragments. Seeds spread by vehicles, machinery, water and in soil.

## Management strategies

Zebrina can reproduce and spread from single pieces of stem or root fragments. Careful handpulling is required in order to be certain to remove all stem and root fragments from the soil.

Regular mowing can be effective, but a catcher should be used to prevent the spread of stem pieces.

Be sure to dispose of the plant carefully, by allowing it to rot in a sealed black plastic bag for one week before placing it in a refuse bin. Zebrina is not suitable for composting or dumping in a 'green waste' section of a refuse station.

## Herbicide control

There are no herbicide products specifically registered for the control of zebrina in Queensland. However, a permit held by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries allows people generally to use some herbicide products to control zebrina 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).

## Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

**Table 1. Herbicides for the control of zebrina**

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	Fluroxypyr 200 g/L (e.g. Fluroxypyr 200)	500 mL to 1 L per 100 L water	APVMA permit PER11463 Permit expires 30/06/2023	Spot spray Follow-up spray on re-growth may be required

**Read the label carefully before use. Always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.**

This fact sheet is developed with funding support from the Land Protection Fund.

Fact sheets are available from Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) service centres and our Customer Service Centre (telephone 13 25 23). Check our website at [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au) to ensure you have the latest version of this fact sheet. The control methods referred to in this fact sheet should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation, and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the use of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, DAF does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.

