



# Declared Plant Policy

*This policy relates to natural resources management under section 9(1)(d) of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act), enabling co-ordinated implementation and promotion of sound management programs and practices for the use, development or protection of natural resources of the State. Specifically, this policy provides guidance on the use and management of natural resources relating to the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community, as per object s7(1)(f) of the Act.*

## climbing asparagus fern (*Asparagus plumosus*)

Climbing asparagus fern is a summer-growing perennial vine similar to bridal creeper. It is a casual garden escape in South Australia, but a significant invader of native vegetation in the eastern States and so is classed as a Weed of National Significance.

### Management Plan for Climbing Asparagus Fern

#### Outcomes

- Prevention of national trade in Weeds of National Significance.

#### Objectives

- No supply of asparagus weeds by growers or retailers in South Australia.

#### Best Practice Implementation

- Sale and movement of climbing asparagus fern is prohibited in South Australia.
- Compliance action by regional Landscape boards and Green Adelaide in the event that climbing asparagus fern is offered for sale in South Australia.

#### Regional Implementation

Refer to regional management plans for further details.

Region	Actions
Alinytjara Wilurara	Prevent sale or movement
Eyre Peninsula	Prevent sale or movement
Green Adelaide	Prevent sale or movement
Hills and Fleurieu	Prevent sale or movement
Kangaroo Island	Prevent sale or movement
Limestone Coast	Prevent sale or movement
Murraylands and Riverland	Prevent sale or movement
Northern and Yorke	Prevent sale or movement
South Australian Arid Lands	Prevent sale or movement

## Declaration

To implement this policy, climbing asparagus fern is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* throughout the whole of the State of South Australia to prevent any further planting, sale and movement. Its entry to the State, movement or transport on a public road by itself or as a contaminant, or sale by itself or as a contaminant are prohibited.

Climbing asparagus fern is declared in category 2 under the Act for the purpose of setting maximum penalties and for other purposes. Any permit to allow its entry, road transport or sale can only be issued by the Chief Executive of the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) or their delegate pursuant to section 197.

Under the *Landscape South Australia (General) Regulations 2020*, Regulation 27 specifies the conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 186 and may transport wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying climbing asparagus fern on public roads, or bring them into the State. Regulation 28 specifies conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 188(2) and may sell wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying climbing asparagus fern. Note that certain produce or goods may be excluded from these general movement and sale exemptions by Gazettal Notice of the Chief Executive, DEW.

The following sections of the Act apply to *Asparagus plumosus* throughout each of the regions noted below:

Sections of Act	Region								
	AW	EP	GA	HF	KI	LC	MIR	NY	SAAL
186(1) Prohibiting entry to area	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
186(2) Prohibiting movement on public roads	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(1) Prohibiting sale of the plant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(2) Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
190 Requiring notification of presence									
192(1) Land owners to destroy the plant on their properties									
192(2) Land owners to control the plant on their properties									
194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves									

## Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 2025, or in the event of a change in one or more regional management plans for *Asparagus plumosus* or a change in its status as a Weed of National Significance.

## Weed Risk

### Invasiveness

*Asparagus plumosus* is dispersed by seeds produced in berries that are eaten by many species of native and introduced birds. Seedlings establish readily among undisturbed native vegetation in suitable climates.

### Impacts

Climbing asparagus fern is a climbing plant that can competes with native vegetation in suitable climates. The wiry stems smother vegetation to 3 metres tall. Unlike bridal creeper, it does not have a summer dormant period and so is not a significant invader of native vegetation in South Australia.

### Potential distribution

*Asparagus plumosus* is a significant weed in moist subtropical climates in eastern Australia. In South Australia it is a casual garden escape of high rainfall areas, persisting in abandoned gardens and where they have been dumped with garden waste.

## **Feasibility of Containment**

### Control costs

Control by herbicides is labour-intensive and results in some off-target damage occurs but may be used to protect high value sites.

### Persistence

Climbing asparagus fern can maintain itself indefinitely in suitable climates, regenerating readily from rhizomes unless killed by prolonged drought. The seeds are relatively short lived and do not form large seed banks in the soil under an infestation.

### Current distribution

According to the State Herbarium of South Australia, *Asparagus plumosus* is recorded, but doubtfully established, in the Flinders Ranges, Kangaroo Island, Murray, Yorke Peninsula and Southern Lofty Herbarium regions. These records are mainly plants persisting at old garden sites.

## **State Level Risk Assessment**

Assessment using the Biosecurity SA Weed Risk Management System gave the following comparative weed risk and feasibility of containment scores for native vegetation:

<b>Species</b>	<b>Weed Risk</b>	<b>Feasibility of control</b>	<b>Response at State Level</b>
<i>Asparagus plumosus</i>	low 17	very high 3	monitor

## **Considerations**

*Asparagus plumosus* is a traditional garden plant that is not now marketed commercially. It has sometimes been confused with *Asparagus setaceus* in Australian floras and gardening literature.

## **Synonymy**

*Asparagus plumosus* Baker, J. Linn. Soc., Bot. 14: 613 (1875).

Nomenclatural synonym:

*Protasparagus plumosus* (Baker) Oberm., S. African J. Bot. 2: 244 (1983).

Other common names include lace fern and ferny asparagus.

## **References**

National Asparagus Weeds Management Committee (2006) *Asparagus Weeds Best Practice Manual*. (Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation: Adelaide).

Hon David Speirs MP  
**Minister for Environment and Water**

Date: 28 March 2021