



THE EYRE
PENINSULA
REGION:

Incorporating the 11 local council areas of the Eyre Peninsula, including Whyalla, Ceduna and Port Lincoln

For more information on EPNRM, go to www.epnrm.sa.gov.au

“All property owners have a responsibility to control cutleaf mignonette plants on their property.”



Cutleaf Mignonette (*Reseda lutea*)

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CUTLEAF

What do the plants look like?

Cutleaf mignonette is a deep-rooted perennial weed which can grow up to 80cm high. Its branching root system extends to 2 m below the ground. Plants emerge from mid to late winter and prior to flowering, can be mistaken for Lincoln weed (*Diploaxis tenuifolia*). In spring, cutleaf stands out in a paddock with its leafy stems branching rigidly from the base and its green-yellow flowers clustered in erect spikes. The fruit capsule will remain green but will open at the tip, shedding numerous shiny black seeds.



Cutleaf, in flower, growing on a roadside.

Why should cutleaf be controlled?

Cutleaf mignonette contaminates produce and competes with field crops for light and nutrients. A heavy infestation of cutleaf in a cereal crop can reduce yield by up to 60%. It can host horticultural pests and diseases and has the potential to cause major losses in vegetable crops.



Cutleaf seed pods and flowers.

How is cutleaf spread?

Cutleaf is most effectively spread by seed which can be moved by stock, contaminated produce and vehicles. Place stock in a holding paddock for at least 14 days when moving them from a cutleaf infested paddock to ensure any weed seeds have moved through the animals' system. Under favourable conditions, cultivation can spread this weed across paddocks via root fragments.

What are my responsibilities?

Cutleaf is declared under the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*. That means it is illegal to transport or sell this plant and all property owners have a responsibility to control it on their property. Residents who rent their properties also have obligations to control any weeds present.

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What are the best ways to control cutleaf mignonette?

As for any weed, prevention is better than a cure so try to keep cutleaf off your property. Otherwise timing of control is important and plants should be destroyed before setting seed.

Destroying the plants at the end of the growing season will not help to control the infestation. A program developed over a number of years including treatment in non-crop years is critical for control. A season should not be missed and control should be conducted every year until the infestation is eradicated.

Physical removal: Small infestations can be hand pulled. Slashing is not effective and will encourage more growth of flowering stems and cultivating can spread root fragments into clean ground.



Close-up of cutleaf flower and leaves



It is important when removing plants that they are disposed of correctly, by deep burial or placed in garbage bags and into the normal rubbish bin if you have access to a garbage service.

It is important not to place plants in the green waste bin.

Chemical methods: Chemicals should be used when the plant is green and actively growing and not under any kind of stress (i.e. brown), and before flowering, usually during early spring.

Chemicals registered in South Australia for the control of cutleaf mignonette by spot spraying include those based on the active ingredients picloram, metsulfuron-methyl or glyphosate.

For treatment of cereal crops with boom-sprays use herbicides based on metsulfuron-methyl, MCPA or 2-4D amine, depending on cropping and pasture rotations.

Note: 2-4D should not be used on adult cutleaf plants as they show resistance.

These products are available from rural supplies or hardware stores. Labels of chemicals should always be read and instructions followed.

For more information on cutleaf mignonette, contact your local EPNRM office (see contact details on this page).

