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Cape tulip (two-leaf)

Common name: Cape tulip (two-leaf)

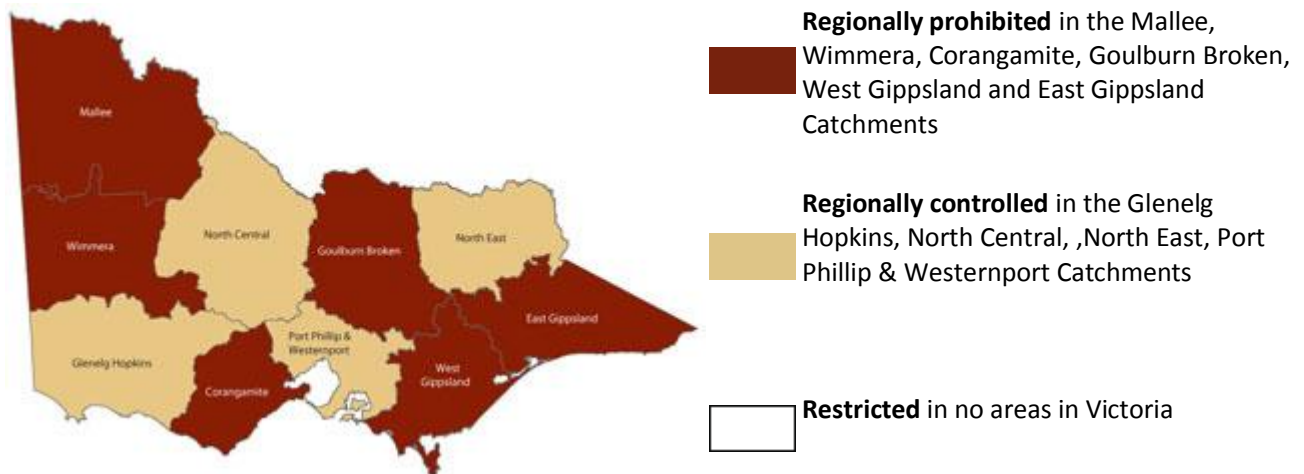
Scientific name: *Moraea miniata* Andrews

Other scientific name/s: *Homeria miniata* (Andr.) Sweet

Other common name/s:

Plant status

Catchment management authority boundaries



[Read more about the classification of invasive plants in Victoria](#)

Plant images



Plant biology

Appearance	Herbaceous plant - Forb (flowering herbaceous plant - not a grass)
Description	Cape tulip (two-leaf) is a perennial herb growing to 60 cm high, with annual leaves and flowers growing from an underground corm surrounded by a black tunic.
Stems	Stems are stiff, erect and somewhat zigzagged.
Leaves	Each plant produces two or three leaves which are flat, 1-2 cm wide and up to 80 cm long. Leaves are somewhat smaller than those of Cape tulip (one-leaf).
Flowers	Cape tulip (two-leaf) flowers are smaller and more numerous than those of Cape tulip (one-leaf). They grow 2-4 cm in diameter with six pink-to-salmon coloured petals and yellow bases which are dotted with green. Flowers are produced in clusters at the end of branch stems.
Seeds	Seeds of Cape tulip (two-leaf) are non-fleshy capsules, 9-16 mm long, 1.5-2 mm wide and are formed after flowering.

Growth and lifecycle

Method of reproduction and dispersal

Cape tulip (two-leaf) reproduces by one or two corms which are produced at the base of the plant. It also reproduces by cormils that are produced in the leaf axils and around the corms at the base of the plant.

Cultivation and movement of contaminated farm produce are the most common forms of dispersal for the Cape tulip (two-leaf) in an agricultural environment. Cape tulip corms can also be spread by floodwaters.

Flower emergence coincides with corm exhaustion in early spring (varies with subsoil moisture). Cormils begin to develop soon after flower emergence. Towards the end of spring the top growth dies down, cormils separate from the parent plant and the corms become dormant over summer.

Rate of growth and spread

Cape tulip (two-leaf) plants are two to three years old before they flower and produce viable corms and cormils. Corm germination and growth rate vary according to autumn rain events.

If sufficient rain is not received, corms will remain or become dormant until the next season. The rate of spread is dependant on the presence and persistence of suitable vectors.

Seedbank propagule persistence

Corms of the Cape tulip (two-leaf) may remain dormant in the soil for up to eight years. It is estimated that in an established patch the weed can produce up to 200,000 cormils per square metre.

Preferred habitat

Cape tulip (two-leaf) has the ability to grow on a range of soils from light sands to heavier winter wet clays.

The weed prefers damp clay flats with ample light and little competition. It does not establish well in shaded sites.


This is generally a weed of grazing land and is found mostly in areas with annual rainfall of less than 600 mm.

The weed will invade dry coastal heathland, heathy woodland, lowland grassland, grassy woodland, dry sclerophyll forest, woodland and freshwater wetland vegetation.

The plant can tolerate heavily waterlogged soil, mild frost and drought.

Growth calendar

The icons on the calendar below represent the times of year for flowering, seeding, germination, the dormancy period of Cape tulip (two-leaf) and also the optimum time for treatment.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Flowering												
Seeding												
Germination												
Dormancy												
Treatment												

Impact

Agricultural and economic impacts

All parts of the Cape tulip (two-leaf) plant are toxic to all types of grazing animals. The poison is a glycoside that causes loss of appetite, weakness, depression, blindness, dysentery, scouring, paralysis and death.

Stock accustomed to grazing on infested pasture are usually not affected as they know not to eat the plants. This results in desirable pasture species being replaced by the Cape tulip (two-leaf) due to selective grazing which further decreases the lands stock carrying capacity.

Management

Prescribed measures for the control of noxious weeds

- Application of a registered herbicide

[Important information about prescribed measures for the control of noxious weeds](#)

Other management techniques

Changes in land use practices and spread prevention may also support Cape tulip (two leaf) management after implementing the prescribed measures above.

References

Parsons, W.T. and Cuthbertson, E.G. 2001, Noxious weeds of Australia, 2nd edn, Inkata Press, Melbourne & Sydney.
Department of Primary Industries, Regionally Prohibited Weed Information Sheet - Cape Tulip (two-leaf), 2010.