

Environmental weed risk assessment

Sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*)

The sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) is a member of the morning glory or Convolvulaceae family and is not related to the common potato. The plant has long trailing slender stems and is perennial but is treated as an annual in a cropping system. Sweet potato is a semi-tropical plant that grows best between 20 and 30°C while a minimum frost-free growing season of four to six months is required.

Weed lists

National-international:

- Not listed in Weeds of Australia (398 weed species) <https://weeds.org.au/weeds-profiles/>
- Not listed in Weeds of Australia website [Fact sheet Index \(lucidcentral.org\)](https://www.lucidcentral.org/fact-sheet-index/)
- In the Global Compendium of Weeds, sweet potato is listed as an agricultural weed, casual alien, cultivation escape, naturalised, weed (Randall 2017).

Western Australia:

- “It has escaped from gardens in the Kimberley and around Perth” (Hussey et al. 2007).
- Recorded as naturalised in the following IBRA Regions of WA: Victoria Bonaparte and Swan Coastal Plain (Keighery and Longman 2004).
- Not listed in naturalised taxa recorded from conservation lands in Western Australia (Keighery 1991).



Figure 1 Distribution of sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) in Australia (Source: ‘The Australasian Virtual Herbarium’)

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Assessed using the 'Environmental weed risk assessment protocol for growing non-indigenous plants in the Western Australian rangelands' (Moore et al. 2022)

Region	Filter A	Filter B	Weed Risk Assessment rating
	Is the species a weed in similar environments in Australia or overseas?	Is the species likely to persist in the environment without management*?	
Kimberley	No	No	Negligible to low
Pilbara	No	No	Negligible to low
Gascoyne – Goldfields	No	No	Negligible to low
Agricultural area	No	No	Negligible to low

*Without management means no fertiliser, Rhizobia, irrigation, grazing management or control of competition from other species

References

Hussey BMJ, Keighery GJ, Dodd J, Lloyd SG, Cousens RD (2007) 'Western weeds. A guide to the weeds of Western Australia'. Second Edition. The Weeds Society of Western Australia Inc.

Keighery GJ (1991) Environmental weeds of Western Australia. *Kowari*, **2**: 180-188.

Keighery G, Longman V (2004) The naturalized vascular plants of Western Australia 1: Checklist, environmental weeds and distribution in IBRA regions. *Plant Protection Quarterly*, **19(1)**: 12-32.

Moore G, Munday C, Barua P (2022) 'Environmental weed risk assessment protocol for growing non-indigenous plants in the Western Australian rangelands', Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, *Bulletin no. 4924*, Perth.

Randall RP (2017) 'Global compendium of weeds' (No. Ed. 3).

Weeds of Australia database

https://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/media/Html/trifolium_repens.htm Site accessed 30 November 2021

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January 2022

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