

# Basics of Bush Regeneration

- The bush is an inter-connected system and nature will fill in any gaps we create by clearing or disturbing it. Bush regenerators call these gap filler plants 'weeds'.
- Weeds will also occur where the soil conditions have been changed by urban run-off. Run-off contains many chemicals: fertilizers from our backyards, manure from pets and farm animals, petrol from the road and detergents and chemicals from our houses. The weeds like these conditions but they will ultimately kill the natives.

## What is a weed?

A weed is 'a plant out of place.' It is usually a plant that comes from over-seas. Many weeds like:

- Sun light
- Nutrients
- Disturbed soil

## The 'ideal' weed

- Can grow in a wide range of environments, climates and soils
- Has seed which can survive in the soil for long periods and can germinate at any time
- Has seedlings which grow very quickly
- Flowers soon after germinating (or coming out of its seed)
- Can reproduce asexually (for example with runners, or from a piece of twig left in the soil)
- Has developed a very effective method of spreading its seed
- Is capable of producing large amounts of seed
- Competes aggressively with other plants, gradually choking them out

## Things to remember when removing weeds

- We must always be careful to take out the whole root. Otherwise the plant may re-sprout.
- We should take care to cause as little disturbance as possible, as this may cause the weeds to spread. Therefore we should work slowly and carefully, watch where we are putting our feet and never leave new areas of bare soil.
- Native plants should always be planted where weeds have been removed, so that there is as little bare soil left as possible. The new plants will eventually 'shade out' any new weeds.

## Things to remember when planting native plants

- Always dig the hole nice and large to free up the soil, and then fill in later.
- After removing the plant from its pot, plant as soon as possible to prevent roots drying up.
- Make sure there are no roots showing above the ground.
- Make sure the plant is mulched to prevent the soil drying out and to stop weeds from choking it.
- Never mulch right up to the stem as this will cause the stem to rot.
- Give the plant at least half a bucket of water to get it started in the ground. Then water only once per week, or in very hot weather.