

Horehound spread on Kangaroo Island

- Horehound is a spreading, bushy, perennial weed that thrives on poor soil and invades disturbed ground such as roadsides and waste ground. It also invades poor pastures where there is little competition and is unpalatable to livestock. The burrs contaminate wool, reducing the value of fleece. Because of its ability to invade disturbed vegetation, it is also recognised as an environmental weed.
- Horehound is adapted to a Mediterranean climate similar to conditions across the southern half of SA where annual rainfall exceeds 200 mm. It grows on neutral to alkaline soils, is resistant to levels of frost found in SA and can survive summer droughts.
- Horehound is declared under the Natural Resources Management Act 2004 (NRM Act), and movement, sale and sale of contaminated goods are prohibited under this declaration. Under this declaration, the KI NRM Board also has the power to require landholders to control horehound on their properties and to recover costs of control on adjoining road reserves.
- Natural Resources KI is currently working to control the spread of horehound from the core infestation area at Dover Farm, Emu Bay and along roadsides in the Wisanger area, and North Coast Road and Springs Road with some assistance from landholders.
- Horehound is an opportunistic germinator that can produce up to 10,000 seed per square metre, with seed remaining dormant up to 10 years. There is huge potential for seed to be spread quickly to other areas, as the spiny hooked burrs stick to animals, clothing, shoes and car tyres, especially in wet conditions.
- Horehound has invaded other areas on the Island, and there is concern that spread is still occurring through contaminated fill from quarries, roadworks, dirty machinery and probably also in fodder and produce.

