

African Olive

(Olea europaea Subsp. cuspidata)

How does this weed affect you?

African olive is an aggressive woody weed that invades native bushland, creating a dense shady canopy that excludes the growth of native understorey plants. African olive is a very long-lived tree and permanently changes the plant diversity and structure of bushland. It is a tropical wild olive that comes from eastern Africa. It is related to the edible European olive however the fruit is not edible and has no commercial value. The small black fruits are consumed by birds and spread into bushland areas.

Though common in parts of the Central Coast, this weed has not established in the Pearl Beach area with only small numbers in the area.

Central Coast Council seeks your cooperation in controlling this weed on your property before the weed establishes and spreads further.

How to identify the weed.

Leaves are green on the upper side and may be pale green, buff or cream on the undersides.

The small fruits start green and ripen through red to purple and finally appear black when fully ripe. The trunk and stems often have small corky spots.

Small seedlings can be pulled out by hand or dug out. Larger 100mm in diameter can be cut off at ground level and painted with undiluted glyphosate (Roundup or similar brand) or painted with Vigilant II gel. The chemical needs to be applied within 20 seconds of the cut being made to be effective.

Trees with trunk diameters of larger than 100mm will need to be killed using the drill and inject method. Holes are drilled into the trunk close to ground level at a 45° downward angle with a 6mm drill bit. The hole is filled with glyphosate within 20 seconds of drilling the hole. Holes need to be made and filled every 100mm around the trunk.

Cutting but not poisoning the weed will lead to a bigger problem as the weed will sprout from the remains of the trunk and the roots, this can form a dense forest of shoots making future control efforts much harder.

Do you need more help?

You can contact Central Coast Councils Biosecurity Officer (Weeds) on 4350 1690 or weeds@centralcoast.nsw.gov.au or for local advice and help with identification of the plant, Pearl Beach Bushcare is happy to be contacted with respect to how best to identify and remove the weed.

Contact: Stephen Parsons, Convenor Pearl Beach Bushcare on 0448751595 or Phil Rich 0422515365.