

Environmental weed risk assessment

Figs (*Ficus carica*)

Figs are a species of small deciduous tree in the flowering plant family Moraceae which is native to the Mediterranean and western Asia. It has been cultivated since ancient times and is now widely grown throughout the world, both for its fruit and as an ornamental plant.

Figs are a minor horticultural crop in Western Australia but have been a common garden plant since early settlement.

Weed lists

National-international:

- Not listed in Weeds of Australia (398 weed species) <https://weeds.org.au/weeds-profiles/>
- “Common fig (*Ficus carica*) is widely naturalised in the temperate regions of southern Australia (i.e. in south-western Western Australia, the south-eastern and eastern parts of South Australia, eastern and central Victoria, and some parts of eastern New South Wales). It is also occasionally naturalised in the Northern Territory, sparingly naturalised in south-eastern Queensland, and possibly naturalised on Norfolk Island.

... regarded as an environmental weed in Western Australia and South Australia. It has escaped cultivation in gardens and plantations and spread into natural areas, particularly moist sites near habitation.

This species is currently of most concern in the south-western parts of Western Australia, where it is a common weed of wetland areas and waterways. For example, it has spread to waterways and wetlands around Perth and is present in riparian zones in the Wooroloo Brook catchment. In fact, common fig (*Ficus carica*) ranks quite highly in the Environmental Weed Strategy of Western Australia, due to its perceived invasiveness and impact” Weeds of Australia website [Fact sheet Index \(lucidcentral.org\)](https://weeds.org.au/fact-sheet-index/)

- In the Global Compendium of Weeds, fig is listed as a casual alien, cultivation escape, environmental weed, garden thug, naturalised, noxious weed, weed (Randall 2017).

Western Australia:

- “...It has spread to river banks and creek lines around Perth, and also persists at old settlements sites throughout the south-west, especially from Gingin to Margaret River and Nannup.” (Hussey et al. 2007)
- Recorded as naturalised in the following IBRA Regions of WA- Swan coastal plain, Jarrah Forest (Keighery and Longman 2004)
- “...Naturalised taxa recorded from local government and other conservation reserves in WA” Environmental weeds of Western Australia (Keighery 1991).

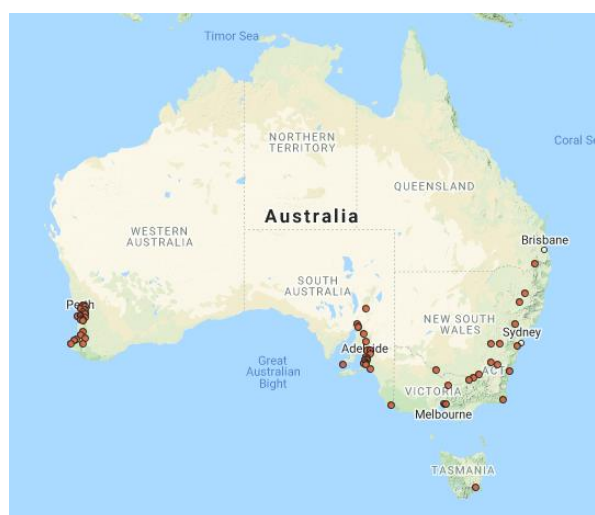


Figure 1 Distribution of fig (*Ficus carica*) in Australia
(Source: 'The Australasian Virtual Herbarium')

Environmental weed risk assessment

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	Yes	Yes	TBD

*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

Assessment by G Moore and N Nazeri
January 2022

Important disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

Copyright © Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, 2022