

## Don't let them get away!

Invasive weeds are most effectively controlled when they and their numbers are small – a little weed control work today will save many dollars and days of work in years to come. Now is the time to take action!

## Control that weed!

Control methods for amsinckia may include a combination of mechanical removal, cultivation, grazing, the selective application of herbicides and ongoing monitoring.

For small areas of amsinckia, **hand-pulling** can be an effective means of control, and is best undertaken from when rosettes appear in autumn to before the plants begin to flower in spring/summer.

On agricultural land, amsinckia can be controlled by **slashing** or **harrowing** prior to the plants seeding – if this is conducted repeatedly, the soil-borne seed bank of this weed will be reduced, making control in following years quicker and easier. Sheep may be used to **intensively graze** amsinckia. This weed can also be suppressed through strategic **pasture management**, by targeted plantings of pasture legumes.

A number of **herbicides** are registered for the control of amsinckia. **Always read and follow the label**, wear protective equipment, and avoid off-target damage during chemical control. Please contact DPIPW for options suitable for your situation.

Areas where plants have been removed should be monitored for at least five years, and any seedlings which emerge controlled.

An effective control program for amsinckia on your property should utilise a range of these techniques. For larger infestations on agricultural properties, consulting an agricultural specialist to help you develop an integrated weed management plan is recommended.

For more details on control methods consult the DPI Victoria website ([www.dpi.vic.gov.au/weeds](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/weeds)).

## Do the right thing

Weed waste dumped in bushland or local reserves gives pest plants a leg-up into new areas. Do the right thing, and dispose of your weed waste responsibly. Amsinckia infestations treated with herbicides can be left to rot on site. Seed bearing waste should be left on site, and burnt if possible. Consult your local fire authority.

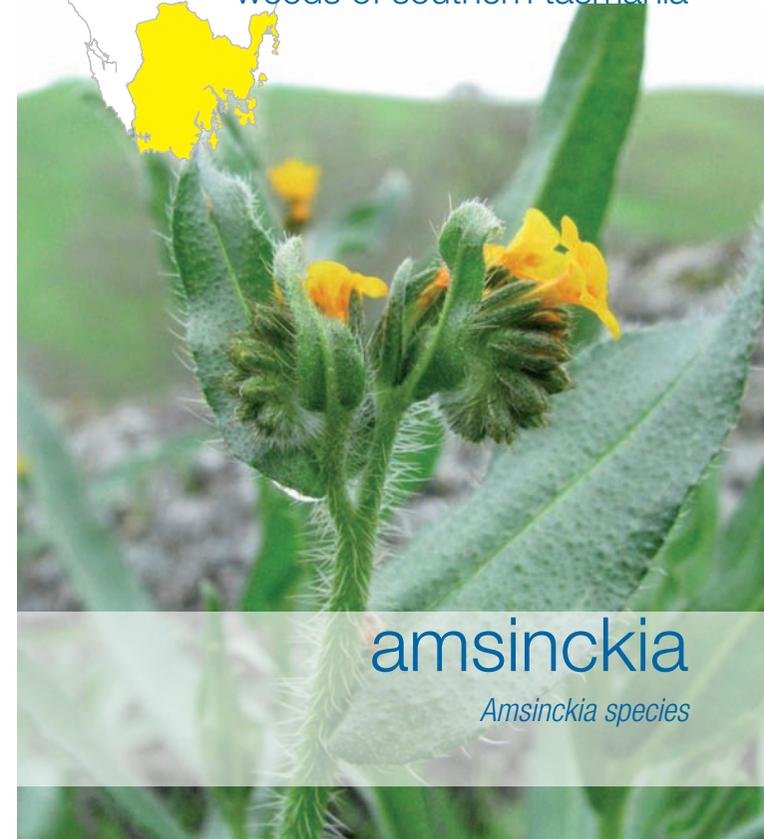
Weeds are easily spread by contaminated machinery and people – check your clothes, shoes, vehicles and other machinery for soil or plant matter that could be carrying weedy plant seeds.

## Get informed

Amsinckia species are a significant weed threat for Southern Tasmania, and it is important that new populations are reported. If you believe you have found this weed contact DPIPW on 1300 368 550.



weeds of southern tasmania



amsinckia  
*Amsinckia species*



**Also known as**  
Yellow burweed

### Impacts

Reduces agricultural productivity, contaminates crops (including poppies) and wool

**Current distribution in Southern Tasmania**  
**Isolated infestations:** Kingborough & Clarence  
**Locally abundant:** Derwent Valley & Central Highlands  
**Localised infestations:** Brighton & Southern Midlands



weed warning

# amsinckia

## Background

The Amsinckia species that threaten Tasmania were thought to have been introduced to Australia from North and South America. There are now several weedy species of amsinckia here, which were thought to have entered the country some time in the mid 1800s, possibly as a contaminant of hay. Since their introduction, they have become significant weeds of crop and pasture in southeastern Australia. Amsinckias are close relatives of Paterson's curse, one of Australia's worst agricultural weeds, and display similarly undesirable characteristics.

Amsinckia are invaders of agricultural and disturbed land, and compete with crops for resources, driving down productivity and reducing crop yields. Their seeds and seed pods can contaminate grain, poppies and wool, and it is thought that at least one species of Amsinckia has the potential to poison, and possibly kill, livestock that consume it.

Amsinckias are successful weeds with the potential to spread much more widely within Tasmania. Their seeds germinate in autumn, before those of many other plants, allowing them to become established early in the season. The coarse-coated burrs which contain its seeds hook easily into the coats of animals or onto clothing, allowing this weed to disperse across large areas.

In Tasmania, amsinckia is already problematic in the south and north of the State, and has the potential to become a significant problem in agricultural areas statewide.

## Get a positive ID

Amsinckias are annual herbs that generally grow to between 20cm and 70cm in height, although they may grow to a metre or more in ideal conditions.

Seedlings sprout in autumn, and have distinctive Y-shaped cotyledons (the first leaf pair to emerge on a seedling). Over winter, these develop into rosettes with lance-shaped leaves up to 20cm long. In late winter or spring, upright flower stems develop from these rosettes. These stems may be branched or unbranched, and are sometimes covered in bristly hairs. Amsinckias grow from a simple tap root with a limited number of lateral roots.

Amsinckia flowers grow in distinctive clusters that resemble coiled green caterpillars. The ends of the flower stalks curl like fiddleheads, and sprout yellow to orange trumpet-shaped flowers up to 6mm long. Flowers are self-pollinating, and mature progressively within the flower head. Each flower produces a burr that holds four seeds. The seeds are 2-3.5mm across, roughly triangular, and brown to black in colour. Each plant may produce up to 1600 seeds. As annual herbs, amsinckias die after seeding.

If you believe you have found amsinckia, please collect a sample of it in a sealed bag and contact a DPI/PWE representative.



## Weed management – it's your responsibility

Many people unwittingly harbour pest plants in their gardens – some even actively grow them, knowing nothing of their weedy ways. Although Amsinckia species are not widespread in Tasmania, they may have already made their way onto your land.

These plants are declared weeds under Tasmania's *Weed Management Act 1999*. It is your responsibility to control amsinckia on your land. Failure to remove them from your property could result in legal action. It is also illegal to distribute the plants or their seeds in any way, whether as cut flowers, in contaminated feed, on livestock or on dirty equipment.

**Weeds are a growing problem.  
Act now – make a plan and make a start!**

### Images:

1. Caterpillar-like flower head
2. Amsinckia's bristly foliage