

WEED of the MONTH

Turkey Rhubarb *Rumex sagittatus*

Turkey rhubarb is a highly invasive climbing or creeping plant with green arrow-shaped leaves and small nuts with papery wings. The stems can be reddish in colour.

It flowers and fruits more aggressively in warmer months and it smothers and out-competes native plants.

Each plant can produce thousands of seeds per year and the seeds can remain dormant in the soil for at least 2 years. The papery fruiting body can be blown over open ground for considerable distances.

From an early age the root develops into a swollen tuber. From that it can sprout new underground stems that creep and form new tubers and often a new plant. This starchy reserve makes it very difficult to kill the plant.

It is not to be confused with another plant called Turkey Rhubarb. *Rheum palmatum* is also known as the Himalayan rhubarb or Chinese Rhubarb. The root has some potent medicinal properties. It looks more like edible rhubarb.



It can smother and pull down other plants



Seeds ready to fly



Removing the plant



Dig out the tubers

To remove the weed move the leaf litter away from the base of the plant and dig down until you reach the tuber. Remove the tubers and rhizomes. Bag and dispose of the plant including flower heads and fruit.

Successful weed control relies on follow up after the initial efforts. This means looking for and controlling regrowth or new seedlings.

Eden Landcare meet regularly for weeding bees mostly held around the edges of Curralo Lake. New members are welcome to join.

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