

# Mother-of-millions (*Bryophyllum* spp.)

## Weed management guide

Weed type  
**Succulent**

February 2023

[www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west](http://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west)



In NSW, weeds are regulated by the NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015. All land managers have a General Biosecurity Duty to contain the spread of weeds.

*“General Biosecurity Duty means that any person dealing with plant matter must take measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate the biosecurity risk (as far as is reasonably practicable).”*

The Regional priority for Mother-of-millions is Asset Protection. In order to achieve this, Land Managers are asked to: *Mitigate the risk of new weeds being introduced to their land. Land managers should mitigate spread from their land. The plant should not be bought, sold, grown, carried or released into the environment.*

For further information, contact your local Biosecurity (Weeds) Officer via Central West Local Land Services or visit NSW WeedWise.

NSW WeedWise



# Habit and description

Mother-of-millions (*Bryophyllum delagoense*) and hybrid of Mother-of-millions (*Bryophyllum x houghtonii*) are short-lived perennial succulent plants native to Madagascar. Mother-of-millions has upright stems that can grow to 30–180 cm tall. The stems are grey to pinkish, hairless and generally unbranched. The leaves are similar in colour to the stems but with darker mottling, which is occasionally also present on the stems. Leaves are fleshy and grow to 15 to 150 mm long and 2–6 mm wide with teeth-like projections where plantlets form. Flowers are bell-shaped with the colour ranging from red to pink. It has four petals which are fused into a tube for most of their length. Flower form dense, drooping clusters at the top of stems. Hybrid Mother-of-millions (*Bryophyllum x houghtonii*) has distinctively folded or boat-shaped leaves with small teeth along their margins.



Photo: © Josh Biddle | NSW DPI



Photo: © John Hasking | NSW DPI



Photo: © NSW DPI

# Reproduction and spread

As its name suggests, Mother-of-millions can spread vegetatively through the production of tiny plantlets on the margins of its leaves which can fall off to produce new plants. Whole or broken off parts of leaves can also root and produce new plants. It can also spread via seed which can survive in the seed bank for several years before germinating. Both seed and plant material can be spread by water, garden waste, animals, vehicles and machinery.

## Impacts

### Agriculture



- Mother-of-millions and hybrid of Mother-of-millions are highly toxic to livestock.
- Eating 5 kg can result in poisoning
- Poisoning more common when plants are in flower (May-October)
- The toxins can accumulate in small amounts if eaten slowly, over time.

### Native vegetation



- Drought tolerant and can form large infestations in grasslands and open woodlands
- Outcompetes native herbs that are important food for threatened fauna
- Very invasive in coastal sandy sites

## Management

### Chemical



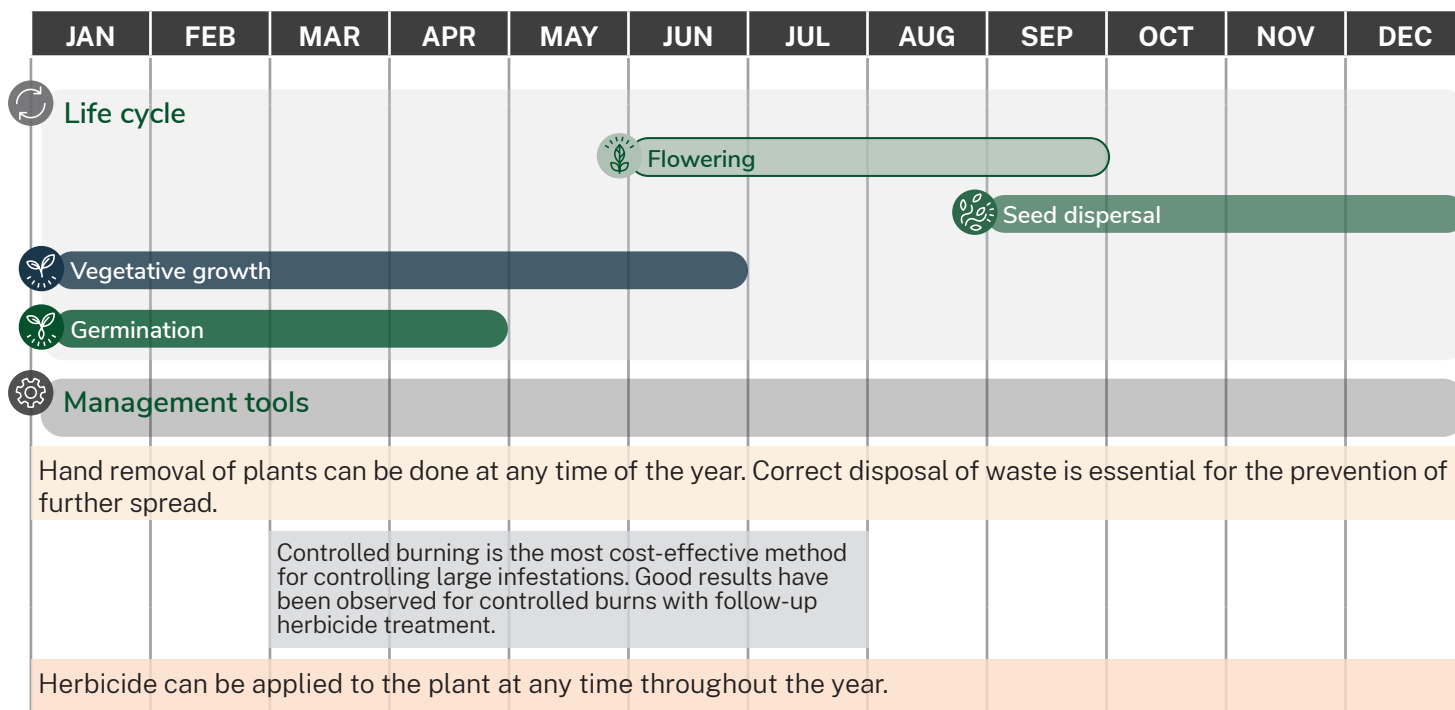
- Herbicide treatment via spot spraying or boom spraying can be effective at controlling Mother-of-millions
- Seek the guidance of an experienced Weeds Officer for expert advice on herbicide use.
- Visit [www.apvma.gov.au](http://www.apvma.gov.au) for a list of registered products, product labels and permit requirements.
- NSW DPI (2018) provides a list of recommended herbicides for the control of Mother-of-millions at <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/MotherofMillions>

### Non-chemical



- Hand pulling is effective for small infestations or isolated plants but all plants material should be burnt or carefully disposed of.
- Fire can help to control large infestations and promote grass establishment
- Follow up control with spot spraying will be required

# Management calendar



Optimal control options may vary depending on your location and climate. Consult an experienced Weeds Officer based in your local government area for control methods suited to your conditions.

All herbicides must be used in accordance with the herbicide label and permit requirements.

## Further information

For more information on your general biosecurity duties, visit [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity).

For the best guidance on how to meet this duty on your property, contact your expert Weeds Officer at your local council or via Local Land Services [www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west](http://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west).

NSW WeedWise



## References

NSW DPI. (2021). *NSW WeedWise*. <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/motherofmillions>

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