

Fumitory – native to Europe, a weed in South Australia

Fumitory is an annual scrambling herb, germinating in autumn/winter. It is a weed of significance in agricultural areas, and can severely reduce crop yields.

Fumitory invades disturbed sites and cultivated ground, it is also found in Qld, NSW, Vic and W A.

Plants flower between Sept and Nov. They do not require a pollinator as they self-pollinate. Each plant can produce up to 22,500 seeds. The plants only need about three weeks between the flower opening, and the seed maturing.



Seeds can persist in a site for a long time (up to 20 years), making control difficult. Germination is initiated after high temperatures, followed by a cold damp period. Disturbance and exposure to light also promotes germination.



Fumitory can be spread via clothing, boots, vehicles, tools, animals and through the movement of water, for example, along a creek.

Seeds are also spread up to 10m by ants. Ants have a mutually beneficial relationship with fumitory: the seed coating is a food source for the ants collecting habits benefit the seed by depositing it underground.

Fumitory exhibits allelopathic interference. Meaning the

plants can chemically prevent the growth of other plants.

We control Fumitory through hand pulling, but glyphosate spray is also effective. Reclaim the park - remove some Fumitory.

Credit: Murrumbidgee catchment authority

