

## WEED FILE: BINDWEED

REVISED: AUGUST 2015



Great Bindweed

Pink Bindweed



Pink Bindweed – *Calystegia sepium*  
Great Bindweed – *Calystegia silvatica*  
Field Bindweed – *Convolvulus arvensis*

### DESCRIPTION

All of these related species are part of the same family, and are also known as **CONVOLVULUS**.

This Weed File concentrates on the Great Bindweed, but refers to the others where they are distinctly different. However the Herbicide Control section is relevant to all of them.

The Great Bindweed is a very robust climbing and sprawling perennial plant that grows to 3 to 4 metres in height. It occurs throughout New Zealand, and originated in Southern Europe. The Pink Bindweed is common through the North Island and the Upper South Island. However these two species readily cross and a hybrid version with pale pink flowers is now very common on roadsides, drains and hedgerows.

The flowers are very large, white and trumpet shaped, up to about 80mm in diameter. The Pink Bindweed has flowers of similar shape, but slightly smaller and, not surprisingly, pink. The Field Bindweed's flowers are smaller still (30mm diameter), but can be either white or pink.

The leaves of all the Bindweed species are distinctly arrow or shield shaped, with the Great being largest of all (180mm long) and the Field being smallest (40mm).

The stems are hairless and twisting, and often purple tinged where exposed to sunlight. These stems form a dense and convoluted mass (hence the alternate name *Convolvulus*) that twines in an anti-clockwise direction when viewed from above. These stems twist around structures, fences and other plants, giving the Bindweed its characteristic climbing ability.

All of the Bindweeds have an extensive

underground rhizome structure that is very persistent and damage tolerant, and it is this feature that makes the Bindweeds very difficult to control because they can recover quite readily from both physical and chemical trauma. The plants will normally die back above ground during the winter, but in spring will regenerate with fresh and fast-growing aerial growth from the rhizome system.

### MANUAL REMOVAL

Grubbing or digging out is rarely effective in the long term, due to the ability of the plant to regenerate from remaining sections of the rhizome system. Small individual plants may be removed manually if care is taken to also remove the whole underground structure, and all plant material must be removed from the site. Overall, however, it is better to use herbicides to kill the plant in situ.

### HERBICIDE CONTROL

#### Stump Swabbing

Cut the stem close to the ground and remove the cut foliage and stems for mulching. The fresh-cut stump must be liberally swabbed with one of the following:

- **MSF600** at 5g per litre of water.
- **Glyphosate 360** at 100ml per litre of water.

#### Spraying

- **GrassMate** at 60ml per 10 litres of water, applied anytime to whole plant.
- **MSF600** at 5g plus **SuperWetter** at 10ml per 10 litres of water.

**IMPORTANT:** Because of the ability to regrow from the rhizome system, it is essential to follow up with a second spray programme once any regrowth or fresh growth has become evident. This second spray treatment will normally provide a high level of control with very little further regrowth.