

Seeded banana

(*Musa* spp.)

Regional priority weed objective: Eradicate

In valleys north of Nimbin, and in isolated locations around the North Coast, the spread of seeded banana has started to cause concern.

These plants can play host to the Banana Aphid, which spreads Bunchy Top disease. Bunchy Top is the most serious viral disease of bananas worldwide, and an eradication program is underway in Australia.

Bunchy Top is a threat to backyard bananas and our \$400M banana industry. Due to their unchecked dispersal methods, seeded banana plants are also a serious threat to our native vegetation.



Photos: A clump of seeded bananas (*Musa acuminata*) in bushland; the seeds in the fruit of a seeded banana (*Musa acuminata*); a seeded banana plant in a backyard situation (*Musa velutina*).

Description: Seeded bananas look like regular (hybrid) Lady Finger (sugar) bananas. However, they are full of seeds and are not edible. To be sure, check the fruit for seeds.

Leaves: Distinguishing leaf features: leaf stem is longer than those of commercial varieties.

Flowers: Bright pink to purple.

Fruit: Green or pink with numerous black (peppercorn size) seeds. A bunch of bananas can contain up to 18,000 seeds.

Dispersal: Seeds are spread by birds, possums, bats, water rats and other mammals. Can also spread vegetatively from pieces of the parent plant. When growing along a creek system, the seeds and plant material are easily spread by water.

Habitat: Naturalising in clumps in disturbed habitats, suburban yards, and in shaded sites in creek banks, forests and riparian areas.

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Declaration and control

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These weeds are present in limited distribution and abundance in some parts of the state. Elimination of the biosecurity risk posed by these weeds is a reasonably practicable objective.

Control methods

If you have seen, or think you have seen, Seeded banana, please contact Rous County Council on (02) 6623 3800 for positive identification.

Mechanical control: Young seedlings can be manually removed, but be sure to get all of the roots.

Chemical control: GLYPHOSATE 360g/L: 1-part Glyphosate to 10-parts water, e.g. 100ml product to 1 litre water. (APVMA permit Per11733). Inject 5-15 ml of prepared solution into at least two points above knee height on larger plants, and into one point approximately 1/3 of the way up the stem on smaller plants. Use the higher rate on larger plants. All bunches of bananas must be removed and bagged as the seed is viable when left on the plant, even after it has been chemically treated. Please keep bunches contained in a bag or drum and contact Rous County Council on (02) 6623 3800 to arrange disposal.



Photos: A banana plant being injected with Glyphosate; a single banana seed (from *Musa acuminata*); a bunch of fruit from a seeded banana plant (*Musa acuminata*).



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