

# Hudson pear (*Cylindropuntia pallida* & *Cylindropuntia tunicata*)

## Weed management guide

Weed type  
**Cacti**

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 Hudson pear is Eradication. In order to achieve this, Land Managers are asked to: *Mitigate the risk of new weeds being introduced to their land. The plant should be eradicated from the land and the land kept free of the plant. 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

Hudson pear is the name of two species of branched cacti under the genus *Cylindropuntia* namely: *C. pallida* and *C. tunicata*. *C. pallida* is a possible hybrid between *C. tunicata* and another undetermined species but can be easily distinguished once it flowers. *C. pallida* has pink flowers and white spines, while *C. tunicata* has yellowish-pink flowers and straw-coloured spines.

*C. pallida* can grow up to 1.5 m high and up to 3 m wide. It has a cylindrical trunk and rope-like segments which can reach 90 cm long and 4 cm wide. There are clusters of 4-8 spines on the stem which can reach up to 3.5 cm in length. *C. tunicata* grows only up to 0.6 meters high in comparison. Its segments are shorter and thinner, up to 20 cm long and 3 cm wide. However, its spines which are in groups of 4-7 are longer, reaching up to 7 cm long.

These cacti can grow on most soil types but is mainly found on lighter soil types. Hudson pears can be found in a range of habitats including eucalypt woodlands, alluvial floodplains, shrublands and rocky outcrops.



Photo: © Royce Holtkamp | NSW DPI

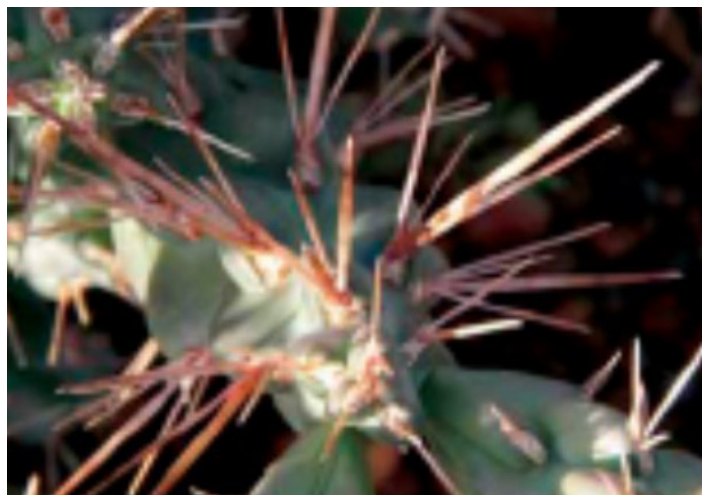


Photo: © Matt Sheehan | WA DPIRD



Photo: © Gary Grimshaw | NSW DPI



Photo: © Matthew Goodwin | NSW DPI

# Reproduction and spread

The arid environments where Hudson pears usually occur are not conducive to seed germination. It will only occur following heavy rain events. As a vegetative adaptation, its plant segments will root when in contact with the ground. The movement of Hudson pears are generally associated with livestock, other animals (native or feral), vehicles, as well as water movement (i.e. surface runoff). Segments of all sizes are capable of starting new plants.

## Impacts

### Agriculture



- It can cause serious injury to livestock and working animals.
- Hudson pears can also impair mustering operations.
- Tires of vehicle and machinery can be punctured by these plants.

### Native vegetation



- Hudson pear is a Weed of National Significance (WoNS) in Australia (NSW Department of Primary Industries, 2017)
- It can displace native flora and also cause injury and death to native fauna like koalas.

## Management

### Chemical



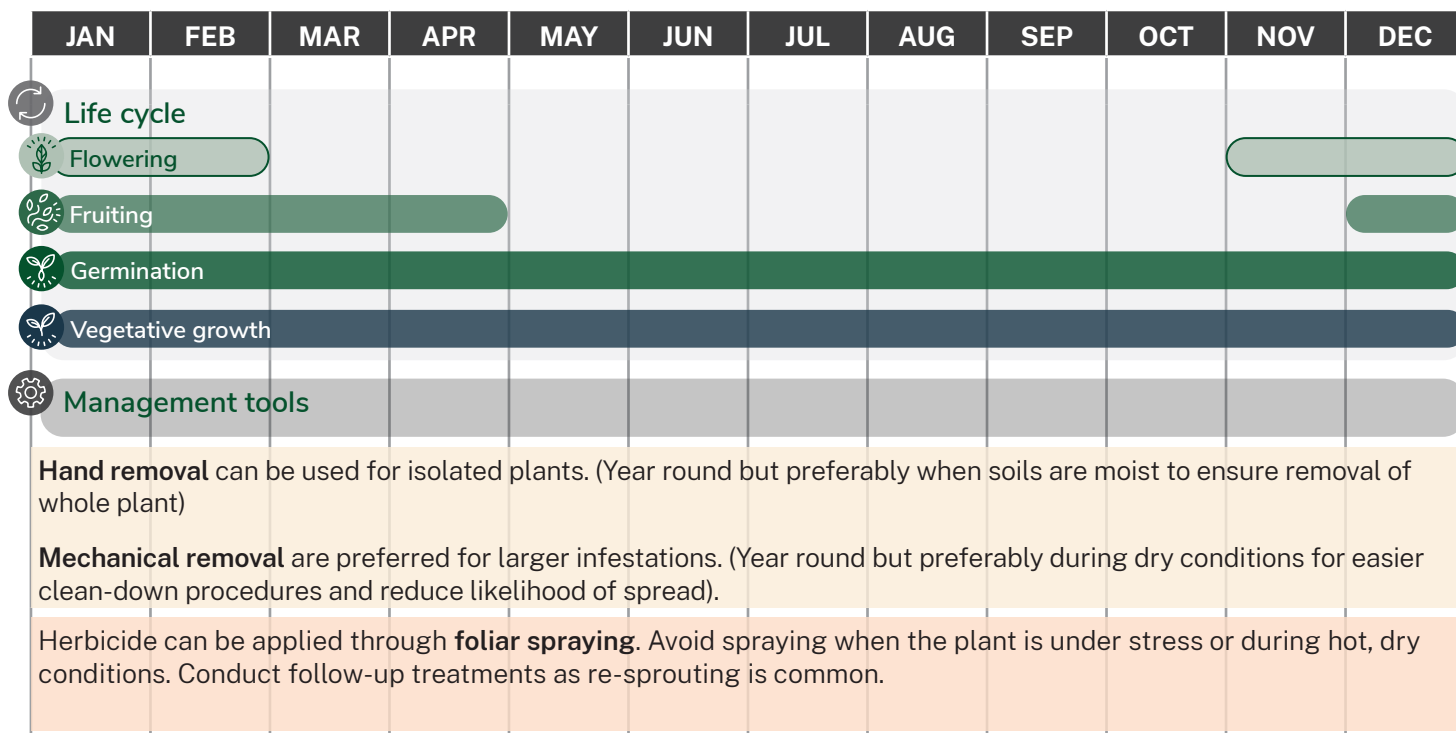
- Herbicides can be applied through spraying. It is recommended to mix in a marker dye as it will be easier to determine if total coverage of plants have been achieved. Follow-up should be done to control re-growth.
- Spray when the plants are actively growing. Avoid spraying when the plant is under stress or during hot, dry conditions.
- 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 Hudson pear at <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/HudsonPear>

### Non-chemical



- To prevent Hudson pear from spreading, vehicles must not leave roads in areas with identified infestations. Clothing, footwear, and equipment must be checked for any signs of plant segments that have adhered when one has been in an infested area. This also applies to animals and stock.
- Hand removal for isolated plants is recommended when the soil is moist but not for larger infestations as missed plants or plant parts can form new infestations.
- Any plant material must be disposed either by burying deep in the ground or burning in hot fire.
- Cochineal bugs are known biological control agents against Hudson pears. Please consult your local weeds officer as different bugs target different species

# 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.

NSW WeedWise



## 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).

## References

NSW Department of Primary Industries. (2017). Weeds of National Significance. Retrieved from NSW WeedWise: <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/WeedListPublics/CategoryResults?showImages=True&categoryId=1&pageTitle=Weeds%20of%20National%20Significance>

NSW DPI. (2018). NSW WeedWise. <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/HudsonPear>



1a South Street  
Grenfell NSW 2810

Office hours:  
Monday to Thursday  
**7:15am-4:30pm**

T: 0458 022 102  
E: [kellie@weddin.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kellie@weddin.nsw.gov.au)  
W: [weddin.nsw.gov.au](http://weddin.nsw.gov.au)