

Madagascar periwinkle

Catharanthus roseus



Alternative Common name

Begrafploasblom (Afrikaans)

All alien plants with this rating have to be removed and destroyed by law

Where does the species come from?

Madagascar

What does this species look like?

It is an evergreen shrub or herbaceous plant growing to 1m tall. The flowers are white to pink with a darker red centre. It invades riverbanks, waste places in dry savanna and also plantations.



Why is it a problem?

It was **imported** into South Africa as a garden ornamental, but has since escaped cultivation to become **invasive** in many parts of the country. It is a **declared invader** into South Africa and must be controlled and/or eradicated where possible. It is capable of invading virtually any type of soil. The stems and the leaves contain a milky sap and the entire plant is **toxic**.



Madagascar Periwinkle invading Marloth Park because it is not controlled.

How to control the plant?

Infestations can only be removed by hand-pulling. Gloves should be worn to protect the skin from the latex. All seeds must first be removed from the plant to prevent them from germinating in the disturbed soil. The seeds must preferably be burned.

No herbicide has been registered specifically for us on this plant, but a herbicide designed for broad-leafed plants may be used.

Bio-Control: No potential agents have been identified.

In the meantime, gardeners and landowners are strongly urged to remove these plants from their property, and to replace them with indigenous plants.

** All photographs were taken in Marloth Park by Uschi Powell.

For advice and assistance please do not hesitate to

contact us at 072 908 0350

