

## How to control Bridal Creeper

**Bridal creeper is a highly invasive and very hardy environmental weed that chokes out our native bush and garden plants. Above-ground, it smothers the canopy of other plants. Below-ground it forms a dense matt of tubers that prevent the roots of other plants from growing.**

**It is a Weed of National Significance.**

**It is spread by birds that eat the berries and excrete the seed so new infestations are always popping up.**

**It is wide-spread along the South Coast.**



### Biological control

Rust fungus was first introduced in our region in the early 2000s as a means of controlling bridal creeper. The rust requires warm, moist conditions to spread so the last three dry years have compromised our ability to effectively use it as a biological control.

Finally the wet, warm start to 2021 has delivered conditions conducive to **activating the rust fungus earlier in the year around Bremer Bay.**

Now is the perfect time for our community to take advantage of these conditions and spread rust fungus to unaffected bridal creeper infestations.

Things to know about fungal rust

- It does not transfer to another plant or crop.
- It does not kill the bridal creeper plant, it simply suppresses its growth, inhibiting flowering and berry production, thereby preventing its spread.
- The rust spores are activated by moisture and warm conditions. To effectively transfer spores to new areas, continuous moisture is required for at least eight hours. Infection transfer is optimal between 16 to 20 degrees Celsius.
- Once the spores are introduced to an area the rust can stay active in the leaf litter throughout summer and reinfest newly emerging plants.

Follow the instructions on the next page to effectively transfer rust to bridal creeper infestations at your place.

Please make contact with the FBG by emailing [bremersprojects@fbg.org.au](mailto:bremersprojects@fbg.org.au) if you are interested in being involve with our weed action group.

This project is funded by the Australian Government Department of Industry, Innovation and Science through the Communities Environment Program, and Mr Rick Wilson MP, Member for O'Connor.



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Industry, Science,**  
**Energy and Resources**

## RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE FOR SPREADING RUST FUNGUS

### Items needed:

- Plastic bag (freezer bag or green compostable bag for example). Plastic is recommended to help maintain humidity and moisture.
- String, cable ties or tape (preferably something reusable) to secure the bag to the plant for 24 hours.
- Spray bottle of water to mist the plant.
- Secateurs to collect infected branches.
- Hat, gloves, appropriate enclosed footwear, sun and insect protection and water.
- A smart phone to record location (turn on location setting to enable GPS) and to photograph site (to help with collecting bags later and data recording).

### How to transfer spores

1. Secure a source of rust from an active site and collect a quantity just for that day. Don't make the first day too big. Complete the full transfer process and then assess time taken. Remember you are going to the same site 24 hours later.
2. Take a section of leaf with spores on it, spray it and the inside of the bag, then place the sample inside the bag.
3. Find an uninfected plant which is still actively growing and place a section of it inside the bag, ensuring the uninfected leaves are in contact with the infected leaves.
4. Tie the bag securely to the healthy plant so wind doesn't dislodge it over the next 24 hours.
5. Return the next day and empty the bags on site. Keep the bags for reuse. Keep good records and ensure litter is not left in the environment.



**Infected plant**



**Healthy plant**



**Infected plant tied to healthy plant**

Now congratulate yourself. Once you have your eye in, stay vigilant for the outer areas that may need follow up in future years. Positive outcomes are not immediate and birds spread the berries so watch their roosting sites for future treatments.