

# Job's tears

## *Coix lacryma-jobi*

Job's tears is a short-lived or long-lived clumping grass that grows along waterways, damp areas and in roadside ditches. Native to tropical Asia, it is now widely naturalised throughout the tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world. Recently, concerned residents have noticed it spreading rapidly along Northern Rivers' creek systems. One near Kyogle and another at Terania Creek. Small infestations have also been located in Teven, Dorrroughby and Numulgi.



### Distribution

Job's tears has naturalised in some urban waterways around Sydney, Brisbane and Perth. It is found in limited distribution around the NSW-Queensland border (Kyogle and Terania) and small infestations have been found in Teven, Dorrroughby and Numulgi.

### Description

Job's tears are 1-2m tall grass clumps that resemble corn stalks. The upright stems are relatively thick and produce prop roots from their lower joints. The large leaves (10-50cm long and 2-5cm wide) are alternately arranged with a stem-clasping base. Leaves are mostly hairless, but their margins may be fringed with fine hairs.

Seed-heads are clustered in the upper leaf forks which contain separate male and female parts. Flowering usually commences in December, with fruit produced through until June. The smooth, shiny bead-like fruit (5-15mm long and 6-10mm wide) usually become hard and bony as they mature. They may be white, bluish-grey, greyish-brown, yellow, orange, reddish, or blackish in colour.

### Habitat

Job's tears forms large and dense clumps along waterways. It also commonly grows in roadside ditches and other damp sites, i.e. wetlands, marshes, moist fields, etc.

### Reproduction and dispersal

The fruit are dispersed through the deliberate cultivation and the use of its seeds for a variety of purposes. Accidental spread by slashers and vehicles is likely to be occurring locally. Seeds may also be dispersed by water, particularly during floods and possibly by birds and animals.



Photo source: Tuckombil Landcare (top right), Hannah Rice-Hayes (bottom).



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### Declaration

#### Regional priority weed objective: Eradication

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 practical objective.

### Control

Suspected Job's Tears plants should be reported to the local council weeds officer.

If you have seen, or think you have seen, Job's Tears please contact Rous County Council on (02) 6623 3800 for a positive identification and advice on removal and control.

#### Chemical control

Glyphosate and Protec Plus have been the herbicides most successfully used against Job's Tears.

**Glyphosate 360g/L:** Various trade names for aquatic use only. Be cautious and spray away from waters edge.

Splatter: 1L in 9L water aimed at lush growth especially at the base of plants.

Follow-up spray: 200mL in 10L water with Protec Plus surfactant

#### Non-chemical control

Be cautious if hand-pulling Job's Tears near waterways- it has an extensive root system and can cause bank erosion issues. Seeds can be removed from plants and deep buried on site.



Photo source: Sarah Odgers (top) and Kerry Booth Tate (bottom).

#### For further information contact:

Rous County Council  
02 6623 3800

[www.rous.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rous.nsw.gov.au)

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