

# Blue spur flower

## *Plectranthus ecklonii*

### Family

Lamiaceae (mint)

### Also known as

Plectranthus

### Where is it originally from?

East and South Africa

### What does it look like?

Erect shrub (<2-3 m tall) with young stems covered in short, fine hairs. Oval leaves (6-17 x 3-8 cm) are covered with short fine hairs and dotted with red glands above and below, and are irregularly serrated along the edges. Loose, erect, flowerheads (<30 cm tall) covered in small, tubular, purplish-blue violet flowers (10-15 mm long) appear from December to May, and are followed by tiny brown nutlets.

### Are there any similar species?

*Plectranthus grandis* is hairy and has blue flowers. *P. mahonii* is also similar.

### Why is it weedy?

Moderately long-lived and tolerates semi-shade, damp, and high to moderate temperatures.

### How does it spread?

Produces few seeds, with most new plants forming from stem fragments spread during soil movement and vegetation dumping.

### What damage does it do?

Forms dense stands, prevents the establishment of native plant seedlings and can lead to subsequent invasion of infested areas by weedy vines.

### Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Heavily disturbed bush and shrubland, and bush margins especially in northern areas.

### What can I do to get rid of it?

Easy to control.

1. Dig out (all year round): Dispose of at a refuse transfer station or burn or bury deeply.
2. Cut down and paint stump (all year round): glyphosate (200ml/L) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (1g/L) or triclopyr 600 EC (100ml/L) or triclopyr 120g/L (500ml/L).
3. Spray (all year round): glyphosate (10ml/L + penetrant) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (10g/100L + penetrant (spraygun) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (2g/10L + penetrant (knapsack)) or triclopyr 600 EC (30ml/10L) or triclopyr 120g/L (15ml/1L).

### What can I do to stop it coming back?

Cut stems resprout. Follow up within 3-6 months to kill resprouted stems. Replant bare sites.



[www.weedbusters.org.nz](http://www.weedbusters.org.nz)



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



Photo: Trevor James

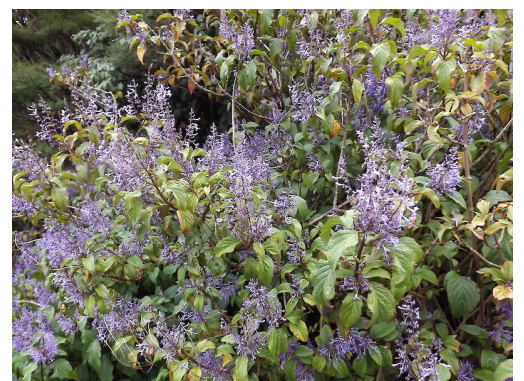


Photo: Carolyn Lewis