

Nasturtium

Tropaeolum majus

Family

Tropaeolaceae (nasturtium)

Also known as

Garden nasturtium

Where is it originally from?

Europe, America, Africa, Asia

What does it look like?

Scrambling or trailing, hairless, aromatic, annual or short-lived perennial, occasionally climbing to 2 m high, with succulent stems (to 10 m long) and watery sap. Distinctive, roundish shield-shaped leaves (18-21 cm diameter) are often slightly asymmetric, bluish underneath and with a long stalk attached to the back of the leaf. Solitary or clustered tubular scarlet orange or yellow flowers (4 cm diameter, Oct-May) with 5 irregular petals are followed by succulent, green, 3-sided seed capsules (10-14 mm long) with caper-like seeds.

Why is it weedy?

Quick maturing, produces many viable seeds, smothering habit and rapid growth. Tolerates salt, wind, hot to cold, semi-shade, damp, damage, and poor soil.

How does it spread?

Soil movement, dumped vegetation, scrambling stems and possibly birds and browsing mammals. Common sources include roadsides, tips, gardens.

What damage does it do?

Smotheres low-growing habitats and prevents the establishment of native plant seedlings.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Disturbed sites especially adjacent to gardens and dumps, Shrubland, herbfield, wetland, and streamsides.

What can I do to get rid of it?

Easy to control.

1. Pull up all vegetation (all year round). Dispose of at a refuse transfer station or burn or bury deeply.
2. Spray (spring-summer): glyphosate (10ml/L + penetrant).

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Succulent stems and capsules resprout readily. Check for resprouting stems, follow up 6 monthly. Replant sites densely to lower the light levels.



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Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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