

Shared responsibility

Protecting our environment, economy and human health from the negative impacts of pests, diseases and weeds is called 'biosecurity'.

Biosecurity laws across Australia are starting to recognise the concept of 'shared responsibility'.

This new, flexible approach is designed to ensure that everyone contributes to good biosecurity, safeguarding special natural values on land and water, whether on public or private land.

In NSW and Queensland this is done through legislation that requires everybody to abide by a general biosecurity duty (or obligation).

The general biosecurity duty requires any person who knowingly creates or spreads a biosecurity risk to take practical measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate that risk. Individuals are encouraged to work out the best ways of managing biosecurity risks.

The tips in this brochure will help you fulfil your biosecurity duty.

Spot the disease

Visitors to natural areas can help alert land managers to pest animals or weeds. Finding the first weed, disease or pest in an area helps land managers eradicate them before they spread. Public reports of established pests like feral pigs help managers coordinate control efforts.

If you see a pest, unusual weed or signs of disease such as large numbers of dead plants or wildlife please contact the person or authority responsible for managing that area.

KEEP YOUR GEAR CLEAN IN THE WILD

Keeping Australia's wild places safe from weeds, feral animals and diseases is hugely challenging.

What can you do?

Use the simple tips in this guide to help stop smothering weeds and killer diseases spreading into our wild places.

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The Invasive Species Council campaigns to protect Australia's native plants and animals from the growing threats of weeds, feral animals and diseases.

With your help, we can do more!

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This community awareness campaign has been made possible through support from NSW Local Land Services. It has been endorsed by Bushwalking NSW.

KEEP YOUR GEAR CLEAN IN THE WILD

Make it second nature



Feral Herald



Sign up now!

Scan the QR code to start receiving the Invasive Species Council's official newsletter, keeping you up to date on the latest invasive species news from around the country.

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KEEP YOUR GEAR CLEAN IN THE WILD

Make it second nature

Nothing beats exploring Australia's wild places – camping, bushwalking, boating or fishing.

And what a place we have to explore! Australia is home to some of the most remote, pristine and beautiful places on the planet.

But while we have a strong ethos of 'treading lightly' when out in the bush, it's all-too-easy to unwittingly spread weeds and diseases that can kill wildlife, contaminate our water and destroy wild places.

Leave hitchhikers behind!

Weeds, pests and diseases are major threats to Australia's native plants and animals.

They can hitch a ride on muddy hiking boots, dirty car rims, in wet fishing gear, or even in your gut.

- **Chytrid** is a fungal disease transmitted between frogs or through contact with contaminated water. It is blamed for frog extinctions here and overseas.
- **Phytophthora** is a root rot that destroys native plants. It is spread in mud and soil on walkers' boots, bikes and vehicles.
- **Didymo**, also known as 'rock snot', has not yet made it to Australia but can be transported on wet fishing gear. It has devastated riverbeds in New Zealand.
- **Myrtle rust** is a fungal disease that affects new growth in eucalypts, melaleucas, bottlebrush and other Myrtaceae plants. The yellow/orange spores are easily spread on clothing, gear and vehicles.
- **Weeds** radically alter ecosystems, smothering and outcompeting native plants and robbing wildlife of food and shelter.
- **Intestinal bugs** picked up travelling don't always show symptoms in some people but can be spread by poor toileting near creeks and severely affect other people and wildlife.



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What you can do

Here are some simple techniques you can use to keep your gear clean and our national parks and other wild places free of deadly pests and diseases:

- **Thoroughly check** your clothes and gear for soil, seeds, debris and spores before arriving at and leaving each location.
- **Clean clothes and gear** by scrubbing in local or town water before arriving at and leaving each location. Pay special attention to footwear, socks, waders, tent pegs, bikes, boats, vehicle bodies and tyres. Ensure all soil, seeds and debris are removed and left on-site.
- **For multi-day journeys** use a small brush to clean boots and tent pegs each day before leaving camp. Empty your tent of seed-free debris.
- **Disinfect** the cleaned soles of your footwear, gaiters, walking poles, packs, bike tyres and your brush using a spray bottle filled with disinfectant before entering and leaving a location. Use methylated spirits (70-100%), bleach (dilute to 25%) or F10 disinfectant solution. Wait at least a minute for the disinfectant to soak in and dry.

By keeping your bushwalking gear clean you are helping to keep diseases out of wild places like Mt Anne, part of Tasmania's stunning Wilderness World Heritage Area.

- **Before use elsewhere**, completely dry all waders, footwear, equipment, boats, bikes and vehicles.
- **Avoid clothes or footwear that capture weed seed.** Choose close-weave clothes, gaiters, sock protectors or long pants.
- **Keep to walking tracks** to avoid spreading diseases into untracked areas, especially on wet ground.
- **Pick off seeds from shoes and clothes**, and check your gear to make sure seeds are not hiding in pockets or on Velcro straps. Carry seeds out in a zip-lock bag.
- **Avoid contaminating water** by taking care with personal hygiene and toileting. Bury toilet waste at least 10cm deep, 100m from water. This stops the spread of giardia and other bugs.
- **Start each trip** with freshly-washed clothes and a clean hat.