

# WANTED

## Alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*).



### Description

The plant forms dense mats of interwoven creeping and layering stems. Over water, stems grow to 60 cm high and up to 10 m long, with large, hollow internodes. Mats may extend 15 metres over the water surface and become so robust they can support the weight of a person. On land, stems are shorter and internodes (sections of stem) are smaller and less hollow.

Alligator weed has leaves occurring in opposite pairs along the stems. The leaves are shiny, spear-shaped, sessile (no stalk), entire and about 2-7 cm long and 1-2 cm wide.

Flowers appear from November to March. Small white papery flower heads 8-10 mm in diameter grow at the end of short stalks that rise from the leaf axils.

Alligator weed has an extensive underground root system. Roots are relatively fine and short in water but become thicker, starchy and rhizome-like in soil – able to penetrate to depths of over 50 cm. Roots and stems have been found growing more than 1 metre below the surface. Root storage tissues allow for survival over long dry periods.

### Whereabouts

Last seen at Berry and Sanctuary Point. Often seen frequenting watercourses and wetlands.

### Goal

Eradication from the Shoalhaven local government area.

### Website Links [NSW WeedWise](#)

**Look-alike** Lesser Joyweed (*Alternanthera denticulata*). Notable difference: Lesser joyweed has thinner toothed leaves and stems that are not hollow.

