

South African orchid

Disa bracteata

- This fleshy orchid starts growing in early spring and reaches a height of about 40 cm.
- It has up to 3 underground tubers at the base of the plant.
- Small yellow and reddish-brown flowers are clustered along the upper part of the stem giving the flower spike a similar appearance to an asparagus spear.
- Flowering takes place from October to December. Following this, plants dieback to underground tubers and re-appear in the following spring.

Pre-flowering plant



Environmental Weed

REMOVING SOUTH AFRICAN ORCHID

By hand

- Once South African orchid has flowered, the only effective treatment is to dig it out. For this method to be effective, all the tubers need to be dug up and it must be disposed of in a way that ensures it does not spread even further. This can be done by placing plants (including tubers and seeds) inside two sealed bags and disposing of it in general waste. Removed plants or plant material must not be disposed of in green waste.

Foliar spraying

- Before the flowers fully develop and open, South African orchid can be controlled by herbicides. The most effective herbicide products are those containing Metsulfuron-methyl (eg. Associate), or Glyphosate (eg. Weedmaster Duo). Foliar spraying is when you directly spray the leaves of a plant. However, herbicides can have a difficult time sticking to and penetrating the leaves of South African orchid, so adding a wetting agent such as Pulse Penetrant is important for the spraying to be effective at killing the plant.

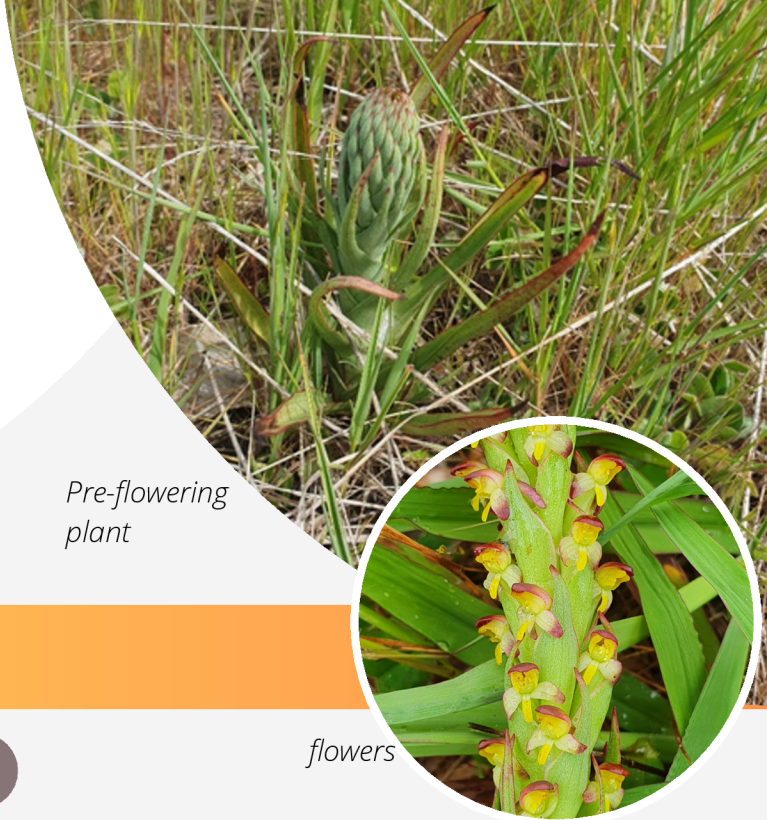
South African orchid can easily be confused with some native plants. Care should be taken to correctly identify South African orchid before any control methods are used. If you are unsure, please do not hesitate to contact the Natural Areas and Biodiversity team to confirm.

IMPACTS

South African orchid can be found in a wide range of landscapes, preferring where the soil has been disturbed. However, it can also invade our bushland reserves and other natural areas, where it can outcompete and replace native species including threatened orchids.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Each South African orchid can produce millions of tiny seeds, which are moved around the landscape by wind and water. It can also be spread through slashing, or when soil and mud containing seeds and tubers is moved by vehicles, machinery or shoes.



flowers



seedling