

Biosecurity Policy - Importation of Flora Guidelines

1. Overview

The purpose of the Biosecurity and Importation of Flora Guidelines is to provide proponents and Rottnest Island Authority (RIA) with guidance when applying the Biosecurity Flora Importation Policy.

This Guideline provides guidance on the selection of species types associated with rehabilitation, landscaping, turf, residential and businesses, decoration and events activities and guidance on ensuring that imported flora is disease, weed and pest free.

Guidance is also provided for managing risks associated with vehicles and machinery and the use of pesticides, herbicides, soils and wetting agent on Wadjemup / Rottnest Island.

2. Objectives

The key objectives of these Guidelines are to:

- Outline suitable flora species that may be imported and used on Rottnest Island
- Ensure that all flora importation meets RIA's statutory responsibilities
- Protect and promote biodiversity, and contribute to the viability of natural ecosystems by maintaining the integrity of floristic communities
- Reduce the need for and occurrence of watering, and the cost of maintaining plantings and gardens
- Minimise the risk of introduction and spread of disease, weed or pests
- Permit the importation of exotic species where the risks of weeds, pests, diseases and pathogens are adequately managed
- Ensure works on Rottnest Island do not impact the biosecurity of the island

3. Scope

These Guidelines and any associated documentation and forms apply to all operations of RIA, lessees, licensees, volunteers, contractors, other government agencies, and all visitors to the island.

4. Definitions

Biosecurity means a set of preventive measures designed to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases, quarantined pests, invasive species, and living modified organisms.

Contractor as defined in the Australian Standard, General Conditions of Contract AS 2124-1992.

Exotic means an introduced, alien, non-indigenous, or non-native species is a species living outside its native distributional range, which has arrived there by human or natural activity, either deliberate or accidental.

Flora means any form of plant life, and any part or seeds or spores of such flora.

Heritage is the legacy of physical and cultural attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.

Importer refers to any person causing or allowing any flora to be brought within the limits of the Island.

Landscaping refers to any activity that modifies the visible features of an area of land. It means land developed with garden beds, shrubs and trees, or by the planting of lawns and includes features such as retaining walls, rockeries, ornamental ponds, pools, barbeque areas, playgrounds, and any other such area approved by the RIA as a landscaped area.

Native refers to a flora species that is native to a given region or ecosystem if its presence in that region is the result of only natural processes, with no human intervention.

Provenance refers to the origins of flora collected from a natural population.

Rehabilitation is the process of replanting to return the environment to its natural state.

Residential planting refers to flora planted or imported by residents who are holding a temporary or permanent residential lease.

Special events refer to weddings, ceremonies, memorials, competitions and any other social, cultural and business occasion.

5. Flora Importation

- Under *Rottnest Island Regulation 41B*, no flora is to be brought to the island. It states that 'a person must not without permission cause or allow any flora to be brought within the limits of the island'. Written permission must be received from the delegated authority prior to the importation of any flora including seeds and flowers to Rottnest Island.
- Unless otherwise specified, only flora species native to Rottnest Island are to be imported for landscaping and rehabilitation purposes. Non-native flora may be imported for the following purposes where the risk of disease, weeds, or pests are adequately managed, subject to permissions and approval conditions:
 - Residential fruit, herb, and vegetable gardens
 - Floral decorations for special events including weddings
 - Pot plants
 - Heritage purposes
 - Amenity purposes within the main settlement area.

6. Certification

- All flora and soil brought to Rottnest Island shall be demonstrated by the importer to be weed, pest, disease and pathogen free.
- Certified documentation as per the [Biosecurity Importation of Flora Request Form](#) should be provided a minimum of four weeks prior to intended importation occurring.
- If soil or flora is not appropriately demonstrated to be weed, pest, disease and pathogen free, permission under *sub-regulation 41B (2)* may not be granted or may be revoked.
- RIA recognises the following industry certification standards for soil products and seed material:
 - Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA)
 - Australian Association of Bush Regenerators (AABR)
 - Nursery and Garden Industry Australia (NGIA)
- On inspection of stock, by approved RIA personnel, arrived on the island shows visible presence of weeds, pests, disease, and pathogens the stock may not be permitted to leave the holding yard such as the Barge Ramp. Stock may be sent back to the mainland at the Importer's expense if the issues cannot be resolved.
- It is the Importers responsibility to ensure that the supplier of flora engaged are suitably certified and a Biosecurity - Importation of Flora Permission Letter is received by RIA.

7. Local Provenance

- RIA's first preference is to utilise seed or cuttings collected and grown at Rottnest Island for landscaping and rehabilitation requirements on the island, noting the 12 month lead time required for plants to be propagated in the Rottnest Island Nursery.
- If seed or plant stock sourced from Rottnest Island local provenance is unavailable, then it may be sourced from the Swan Coastal Plain local provenance only.

8. Landscaping

- All landscaping is to comply with the requirements of the RIA Development Planning Guideline No 03 Sustainable Development 3.3 Landscaping.
- Flora species selection must be based on suitability to the purpose and use of the area particularly within the settlement and developed areas with due consideration of relevant factors, including:
 - Safety including potential for shedding limbs or hard fruits, and potential for obstructing visibility of pedestrian, bike, and vehicle traffic
 - Sustainability including pruning requirements, water consumption, leaf litter maintenance
 - Consistency with surrounding landscapes
 - Maintenance or enhancement of vistas such as to ensure plantings will not obstruct views from accommodation
 - Amenity of the development
 - Maintenance of structural integrity of built environment including buildings, paved areas, roads and infrastructure

9. Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitation projects shall ensure the selection of species that promote structural and floristic diversity.
- Rehabilitation projects shall reintroduce original floristic communities and species

- that previously occurred within the vicinity of the project area.
- Rehabilitation project managers can engage the Rottnest Island Environmental Services at the earliest stage of the planning process for assistance if required.

10. Turf

- Turf selection must be based on suitability to the purpose and the proposed use of the area, with due consideration of shade tolerance, drought tolerance and wearability.
- Sterile turf varieties that have low water and fertiliser requirements should be selected, wherever practicable.

11. Residential and Business Community

- Residents require written permission from the delegated authority prior to the importation of any flora including seeds and flowers to Rottnest Island and are not to plant on or alter the landscape outside of the leased area.
- Non-native species other than fruit, herbs or vegetables must not be planted in the ground.
- Pot plants containing non-native species, for which permission has previously been granted are allowed, however they must be confined to the leased area, as per section 5.1.
- Residents are responsible for ensuring that no fruit or vegetable, seed or flora material exit the leased area. This shall be enforced through lease condition reports of the property.
- Residents may request RIA's assistance for obtaining indigenous plants and advice on species selection.
- The resident is to maintain the garden area and control weeds within the leased area. This shall be enforced through lease condition reports of the property.

12. Development and Events

- Approvals for land use and development require appropriate planning and implementation of measures to effectively protect native flora, control weeds and minimise the risk of the introduction of pest, disease and costly maintenance regimes.

13. Floral Decoration

- Floral decorations comprising species that are not native to Rottnest Island are limited to cut flowers for special events only such as weddings.
- All floral decorations must be of low risk to biosecurity, no seed or rhizomes may be imported to the island as part of decorations.
- Floral decorations are not permitted to be brought to Rottnest Island for any purpose other than that stated in this document.
- Importers are required to complete a [Biosecurity - Importation of Flora Request Form](#) and email the Environmental Team at rotnest.compliance@dbca.wa.gov.au prior to bringing floral decorations to the Reserve. The completed Request Form will be assessed and may be approved by the required delegates.
- After approvals have been granted, a Flora Importation Permission Letter will be provided.
- All floral decoration is to be disposed of on the mainland following the event and in accordance with the approval form.

14. Vehicles and Machinery

- The Contractor is responsible for having clean plant and equipment including vehicles, tools and boots, free of weeds, pests, diseases and pathogens before arrival on the Island.
- Contractors are responsible for ensuring adequate inspection processes are in place to ensure compliance with the relevant Policy, Guidelines and Rottnest Island Regulations as applicable to this Guideline.

15. Pesticides, Herbicides, Fertilisers and Soil Wetting Agents

- It is best practice to ensure that all herbicides, pesticides, fertilisers and soil wetting agents are accompanied by a chemical risk assessment for application on the island.
- The use of pesticides, herbicides, fertilisers, and soil wetting agents are to be kept to a minimum.
- Application of pesticides and herbicides must be undertaken by appropriately licensed and trained personnel.
- Due care must be taken to ensure that spray drift does not occur during application of herbicides and pesticides outside of the target area during application.
- Only slow-release fertilisers that have been specially formulated for use on Australian native plants may be used for plantings.
- Low environmental impact soil wetting agents made from natural products (not petro-chemical based) may be used on turf areas.
- All herbicides, pesticides, fertilisers and soil wetting agents must be used and stored in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions and specifications and at the appropriate application rates. These products must also be used within the current health, safety and environmental legislation standards.
- It is the responsibility of the user to ensure all herbicides, pesticides, fertilisers and soil wetting agents are contained within the target area. These chemicals should never be allowed to enter lakes, seeps, swamps, groundwater, or the ocean.

16. Application Process to Import Flora

Applicants should:

- Read the Biosecurity Flora Importation Policy
- Complete the [Request to Import Flora Form](#) which includes an assessment to determine that the proposed species are not environmental hazards or declared weeds
- Email completed form to rotnest.compliance@dbca.wa.gov.au
- RIA Officers will undertake a risk-based assessment and provide advice to the Delegated Authority on the outcome of the assessment
- Written confirmation of the assessment outcome is expected within 15 business days, provided that all required information has been submitted.

17. Effective Date

This Guideline is effective from 13 March 2024.

18. Review Period

This Guideline is to be reviewed every three years.

19. Guideline Authorisation

This document details Rottnest Island Authority's Guidelines for the Management of Importation of Flora to Rottnest Island.

Signed:



Jason Banks
Executive Director

13 March 2024

Date:

20. Revision

Rev	Revision Description	Revision by	Date	Page
1	Minor revisions	Rebecca Gabbitus	27 February 2024	All
2	Format to RIA brand style.	Corporate Communications	1 August 2024	All