



## Identification and management of Emerald White Star-bush *Asterolasia asteriscophora ssp. albiflora*

**Habitat:** The White Star-bush is generally only found in Victoria between Monbulk and Cockatoo. It is predominately located in the Emerald township region. It is one of the rarest plants in the Cardinia Shire area. It's conservation status in Victoria is **Endangered** and is listed as **Threatened** under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.

It is now extremely rare in dry woodlands, shrublands and moist to wet heathy open forests with well-drained, loamy soils.

**Appearance:** A slender shrub growing up to 2 metres tall, dark green leaves, with star shaped white to pale lemon coloured flowers.

**Leaves:** Ovate or almost circular leaves, alternate 30 x 10mm in size. Upper surface is dark green, **with distinct clusters of hairs**; under-side is densely covered with rust coloured hairs.

**Flowers:** Star shaped flower up to 15mm wide; **vibrant white** to pale-lemon in colour, not to be confused with the Lemon star-bush (*Asterolasia asteriscophora ssp. asteriscophora*) which has bright yellow flowers.

5 petals with stellate hairs on the outside; 10 stamens often alternating long and short; anthers yellow, flowering September-November.

**Refer to Photo 1 overleaf.**

**Best management practices:** Due to the endangered conservation status and with the exceptionally low number of plants in the wild, it is important that the entire community contributes to preserving this fragile species.

You can help preserve this plant and encourage its wider distribution by giving it a helping hand if you find it on your property. Small populations have been found on road-sides and on nature strips within Cardinia Shire Council.

If you do find the Emerald Star-Bush please do not mow or cut the plant. Try and allocate 2-3 metres around the plant/s to leave as a buffer zone. The larger the buffer zone, the better. Site experience is now showing new seedlings are likely to germinate in the unmown areas if they are not disturbed.

To help manage the plant/s it is advisable to place a small marker stake in the vicinity of the plant so that you can located it at a later date.

You can also help by carefully removing any weed species growing near the Emerald Star Bush.

Common shrubby weeds that may be confused with Emerald Star Bush include; Flax-leaf Broom, Flaxleaf Fleabane, Spanish Heath and small Sweet Pittosporum plants. The Cardinia Shire Council Environment team can assist with identifying native or weed species if you are unsure the plant is a pest.

The Cardinia Shire Council's 'Weed Identification Guide' booklet is also a good resource to help identify weeds.

Small infestations of weeds are best removed by hand. Hand removal is low impact, environmentally friendly. It is important to remove all root matter when removing weeds by hand. The use of herbicides in the vicinity of the Emerald Star Bush is not encouraged as 'herbicide spray drift' in the wind can kill the plants.

For more information on the Emerald Star Bush or how to carry out appropriate weed control contact the Council Environment team on 1300 787 624.

**Photo 1**

**White Star-bush (*Asterolasia asteriscophora* ssp. *albiflora*)**



Note unique identification characteristics are the vibrant white flowers seen in October and distinct clustered groups of hairs on the leaves and stems.