



1. Habit of Angel's trumpet in flower. 2. Flowers showing small spreading petal tips. 3. Flower with gap between it and the green calyx tube 4. Large leaves with pointed tips.



Angel's trumpet (*Brugmansia suaveolens*)

Introduced

Not Declared

Angel's trumpet is a member of the Solanaceae plant family native to tropical South America (i.e. Brazil, Bolivia and Peru). This species has been widely grown as a garden ornamental in the past, but like all of the Angel's trumpets (*Brugmansia* spp.) it is no longer popular in cultivation because it is extremely poisonous.

Distribution

Angel's trumpet has recently been recorded becoming naturalised in north-eastern NSW and south-eastern Queensland. For example, it has formed dense colonies at a few locations along Enoggera Creek in the northern suburbs of Brisbane. It is also naturalised on Norfolk Island and in other parts of the world (e.g. eastern Africa, Florida and on some other Pacific islands).

Description

A large shrub or small tree usually growing to about 3 m tall, but occasionally reaching up to 4.5 m in height. Its younger stems and leaves are hairless or finely hairy. The large leaves (10-30 cm long and 5-12 cm wide) are alternately arranged along the stems with entire margins and pointed tips.

The very large trumpet-shaped flowers (20-35 cm long) are borne singly in the upper leaf forks on stalks 2-3 cm long. These flowers droop downwards and have a large green tube (8-12 cm long) at the base that is made from the fused sepals (i.e. a calyx tube). This tube separates at the tip into 2-5 small lobes. The white or cream-coloured flowers are made up of five petals, which are also fused together into a tube for most of their length. The flower tube is constricted at the base and leaves a space between it and the green calyx tube. The sides of the flower tubes are ribbed or pleated and separate into five pointed lobes (about 1-4 cm long) at the tip. These lobes are usually spreading or only slightly curved upwards. Each flower also has five stamens and an ovary topped with a long style and two-lobed stigma. The fruit is a smooth capsule (10-15 cm long) with four compartments. It contains numerous relatively large, flattened, seeds (7-12 mm long 5-8 mm long).

Quick Facts

- > A large shrub or small tree usually growing to about 3 m tall
- > Large white trumpet-shaped flowers (20-35 cm long) that droop downwards
- > Flower bases surrounded by a green tube that separates at the tip into 2-5 small lobes
- > Smooth spindle-shaped fruit (10-15 cm long) with numerous large flattened seeds

Habitat

In its native range, Angel's trumpet grows on river banks and in forest margins in areas with high humidity and heavy rainfall. Hence it is mainly a weed of riparian vegetation, disturbed sites, waste areas and urban bushland in wetter coastal areas.





1. Infestation along Enoggera Creek in Brisbane. 2. Large drooping trumpet-shaped flowers.

Reproduction and Dispersal

This species reproduces by seed, which are probably dispersed by water and in dumped garden waste. It also spreads vegetatively, suckering to form large colonies and growing from broken stems, which are probably dispersed down waterways during floods.

Why is it an Emerging Threat?

If left unmanaged, this species may eventually form large colonies that may inhibit the flow of waterways and impact on riparian vegetation. In Africa, it has also become a pest of lowland rainforest and forest edges, where it replaces native species.

Control Methods

Individual plants can be manually removed with the aid of suitable tools, but care must be taken to remove the crown, as plants may regrow from the base. There is no information readily available on the control of Angel's trumpet with herbicides, but it is very similar in nature to Wild Tobacco and may respond in a similar way. Some of the products registered for control of Wild Tobacco can be used to control similar shrubby environmental weeds, such as Angel's trumpet, via APVMA off-label Permit 11463 (see <http://permits.apvma.gov.au/PER11463.PDF>).

However, some of these products should not be used near waterways. In such circumstances a basal bark or cut stump application of an aquatically registered formulation of Glyphosate is suggested (e.g. Round-up Biactive or Weedmaster Duo). Please read the off-label permit carefully for the exact products and rates to use and, unless otherwise stated in this permit, the use of these products must be in accordance with the instructions on their labels. Within other state boundaries, it is recommended that all managers consult any relevant permits or government legislation applicable to their region.

Look a-likes

Brugmansia suaveolens is very similar to other Angel's trumpets, including the popular hybrid *Brugmansia × candida*. However, the green tube at the base of *Brugmansia × candida* flowers is partially split down one side, does not separate into small lobes at the tip, and has no obvious gap between it and the white flower tube. The petal tips of *Brugmansia × candida* are also much longer.



Top. *Brugmansia × candida* flowers with longer petal tips.

Bottom. Base of flower showing single point at tip of green calyx tube

The control methods referred to in Weed Watch™ should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the utilisation of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, Technigro does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.

This information has been developed with the assistance of Dr Sheldon Navie. Photographs are also courtesy of Dr Sheldon Navie © Technigro Australia Pty Ltd 2012