Polka-dot plant  (Non Restricted Invasive Weed)  
Hypoestes phyllostachya

A commonly used ornamental plant, polka-dot plant is also known as ‘Freckle face’ and ‘Careless painter’. Spreading from cuttings and from seeds, it easily escapes from gardens into bushland.

Preferring shady fertile areas, it can quickly become a dominant ground plant in regenerating rainforest communities.

Polka-dot plant is an invasive plant which can disrupt native flora communities and ecosystems.

Description

Polka-dot plants grow to a tall herb of about a half a metre high. The leaves are a dark green and covered with pink spots. This feature makes the plant easy to recognise in the wild. It bears inconspicuous purple flowers in late summer through to winter.

Management

Mowing or slashing will not control this plant as the activity will easily spread the weed.

Individual plants can be hand pulled. Care must be taken to remove all the root system and stems, as it will quickly regenerate from these pieces. Young plants with less developed root systems lend themselves more to hand removal.

Don’t attempt to hand remove plants in compacted ground, as this will only result in many of them breaking off and regrowing.

Grip the stem at ground level and carefully pull out the whole plant. Using a knife to cut around the roots will help to remove the plant without breaking the stem.

If you would like further information on weeds look at the A–Z Listing of Weeds at Queensland Government Website.