

*Tasmanian Weeds*  
**Wireweed**  
(Hogweed)

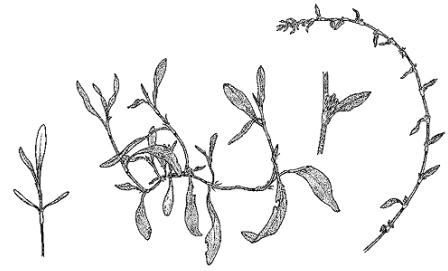
**Genus / Species:**

*Polygonum aviculare* L.  
(*Polygonum heterophyllum* Lindm.)

**Family: Polygonaceae**

**Annual**

Wireweed is common throughout the State and is a major weed in all arable crops. It is both competitive in the early stages and likely to interfere with harvesting operations in cereals when mature. Germination occurs principally in Spring, continuing through into Summer where moisture permits.



The cotyledon has an overall length of 10 to 15 mm, is sessile or has only a very short petiole, and is hairless. Very young plants look like fine grass. The seedling has a long hypocotyl and an epicotyl. The leaves grow singly and the first is 10 to 15 mm long with a short petiole. Later leaves are larger but generally similar to the first leaf. There is a membranous sheath surrounding the base of the leaf and the stem. The plant does not form a rosette, and is hairless.

Young plants may be erect, but this species usually has a spreading and scrambling habit overgrowing surrounding vegetation, with stems reaching 1.0 m in length. The stems branch at the base and along their lower length and are circular or fluted in cross section with shallow longitudinal ridges, solid and hairless. Plant which germinate later in the season, and those which grow in infertile areas, have much smaller leaves 15 to 29 mm long and are generally a much darker green or blue/green in colour.

The flowers are axillary, 2 to 5 together, on short stems. They are about 2 mm in diameter with five petal-like sepals which are green with white or pink margins.

In the one-leaf stage Wireweed is easily confused with Narrow-leaf Plantain. The cotyledons of the Plantain are much longer, and are narrower in relation to their length. The first leaf of Plantain is usually hairy and has a well defined median longitudinal depression and longitudinal veins. Wireweed has a hairless leaf and a sheathing membrane at the base of the leaf.

**Organic Eradication Methods:**

Organic eradication can be helped by:

- Avoid letting soil become Infertile, dry & compact.
- Spray with Full strength Vinegar.
- Manually pull weeds from gardens and lawn ensure ALL the root is removed.
- Salt may be of assistance on younger plants

**References:**

**Text sourced from** - Tasmanian Weed Handbook (Department of Agriculture – Tasmania)

An Organic Weed Control Fact Sheet provided by: [Lifestyle Home Services](http://Lifestyle Home Services)



[www.milifestyle.net](http://www.milifestyle.net)