



Cape Tulip



Cape tulip is poisonous to people and livestock.

Why is Cape tulip a pest?

Cape tulip (*Moraea flaccida* syn. *Homeria flaccida*) is extremely poisonous to both livestock and humans, and establishment in agricultural areas would have serious economic impacts.

All parts of this plant are poisonous, especially fresh leaves. Control of Cape tulip can be extremely difficult. Seeds and corms (underground storage organs from which the plants grow) may be spread on the feet of livestock and by machinery that has been working on infested sites. Corms can be dormant through several growing seasons.

Cape tulip is one of the pests being eradicated under the National Interest Pest Responses programme, led and funded by Biosecurity New Zealand (a business unit of the Ministry for Primary Industries) in partnership with regional councils and the Department of Conservation. It is both a notifiable organism and an unwanted organism under the Biosecurity Act 1993 and is banned from sale, propagation and distribution.

Where is it found?

Cape tulip has been found in many regions across New Zealand. Most Cape tulip sites are in gardens or in pasture where it has escaped from a neighbouring garden). A few sites are the result of people dumping their garden waste instead of taking it for safe disposal.

What does Cape tulip look like?

Cape tulip is a perennial plant belonging to the iris family. New shoots are produced in winter before dying back to an underground corm in early summer. Plants grow to 90 cm tall and have a single leaf and branched flower stalk.

The leaf is long and strap-like and arches from the stem and then lies almost flat on the ground. The upper side of the leaf is shiny green and curled downwards at the edges. The underside is bluish-green.

Flowers appear individually over a two- to four-week period. Each flower only lasts one or two days. Flowers are usually salmon-pink with a band of deeper colour near the base of the petals, sometimes with a yellow centre.

What should I do if I find Cape tulip?

If you think you have found Cape tulip, please call MPI's Exotic Pest and Disease freephone **0800 80 99 66** and we will take care of it. Please don't touch the plants or dig them up.



Photo courtesy of Walter Stahel



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