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## Bridal creeper occurrence in Albany District

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The occurrence of bridal creeper in Albany District is clearly linked to locations of early settlement. Many of these sites still possess scattered plants that have escaped and are now located within the surrounding native vegetation. Observations to date regarding the plants distribution within the District suggest that there is a moisture and fertile soil relationship in place that is limiting its further spread from its current distribution.

Around Kundip and Ravensthorpe townsites the plant is found growing quite successfully on the fertile loam soils, a feature of this mineralized landscape. Here the plant has spread from the sites of early and current settlement out into the native vegetation surrounding the townsites. At Kundip the plant has spread out into the nearby upper reaches of the Steere River. It has subsequently now spread downstream to the junction with the Phillips River at the Culham Inlet. Early settlers were also pursuing agricultural interests as well as mineral opportunities. This

helps explain occurrences of the plant on the lower reaches of the Gairdner River and mid reaches of the Phillips River. Here fertile valley floors of alluvial soils and accessible water provided great opportunities for establishing open pastures for sheep grazing. Unfortunately these riverine sites are also excellent locations for the survival and subsequent spread of the bridal creeper. The plant is nowadays abundant and widespread along these riverine systems.

No other significantly extensive infestations are known from within the district, however small occurrences are occasionally encountered. The port of Hopetoun has an occurrence that is the largest outside of the previously described locations. To date no attempts have been made to control these large infestations of the weed. The sheer enormity of the occurrence in the valley floors precludes the use of conventional herbicide control or any thought of eradication.