

# Methods Of Environmental Weed Control

## Hand pulling

Small weeds and weed seedlings can often be pulled up by hand. It is important when you are doing this not to break the plant near the ground but to pull up the whole weed including the tops of the roots. If you break off the plant near the ground you will leave dormant buds on the base of the stem, from which it will regrow. If the weeds break off close to the ground use a trowel or small fork to dig out the tap roots or crown, or move to another method of environmental weed control.

Watch your back when you pull up weeds. Bending over to pull up weeds puts a big strain on your lower back muscles and you may get a very sore back. Instead of bending over you should kneel beside the weed, grasp it low and tight with both gloved hands, then lean backwards using the weight of your body to pull up the weed. Some weeds pull out quite easily, so pull them straight upwards – eg cobbler's pegs. Others are more strongly rooted and it is best to pull them sideways at first to break a few lateral roots, then straight up or even towards the other side – eg pavonia. If you cannot pull the weed out fairly easily do not try too hard – your back is more important than the weed. Use an appropriate tool.

Always wear gloves and safety goggles whilst pulling environmental weeds – your hands and eyes are more important than the weeds.



**Illustration 7** – hand pulling