

## WAYS TO CONTROL BIND WEED AND COUCH GRASS

### BIND WEED



- **Discourage it young.** Young seedlings can be destroyed when cut several inches below the soil. Whatever you do, don't wait until the weeds are pre-teens.
- **Mulch.** Bindweed likes sunshine, so mulch can discourage it.
- **Till it.** Hoeing, digging, or tilling more mature field bindweed every one to two weeks for several seasons can reduce plant vigour.
- **Torch it** using a weed torch. It's a propane tank with a little torch that burns up the weed.
- **Fry it.** An American gardener reports: "I push short lengths of garden cane into the soil next to the shoots and wrap the stems around the canes. This stops the bindweed from entwining itself around other plants. I then cut off the bottom of 2 litre plastic water (or juice) bottles and remove the cap. I pop the bottle over the cane and bindweed and spray into the neck of the bottle with a concentrated salt mixture. I then replace the cap. Before you know it the plant has shrivelled and died as the heat in the bottle ensures the salt burns it very effectively."

### COUCH GRASS



- **Manual removal and cutting back,** dig out with as much root (or bulb) as possible, using a hand or border fork.
- **Flame gun:** Scorch off weeds with a flame gun. Use only when the foliage is dry and allow sufficient burn-time for deep-rooted weeds, such as dandelions, to be killed

- **Mulching:** Use deep organic mulches such as bark or wood chip to smother weeds around plants. To be effective, keep them topped up to a minimum depth of 10-15cm (4-6in) to smother established annual weeds. Keep woody stems clear of mulch to prevent rotting
- **Edging boards or strips:** These can be used to edge lawns and grass paths to prevent unwanted grass growth into the border. Especially useful where invasive rooted grasses such as couch grass are a problem
- **Root barriers:** These can be inserted into the soil to stop the spread of perennial weeds such as ground elder and horsetail into neighbouring areas A straight barrier can be formed from paving slabs or corrugated iron sheets, but for a flexible solution use a tough fabric like Rootbarrier available from **Greentech**
- Weed-suppressant fabrics – these are often plastic and very effective but can leave your soil saturated with small pieces and micro-specs of plastic.  
<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=343>

## PLASTICS

Plastics are linked to cancers. They contain chemicals which when broken down enter the food chain via the soil in which we grow our plants and can be ingested by us through the foods we grow and eat.

<http://www.breastcancerfund.org/clear-science/environmental-breast-cancer-links/plastics/?referrer=https://www.google.co.uk/>