

# Wild tobacco

*Solanum mauritianum*



Originating in Argentina, wild tobacco is a weed of almost any open situation. It is tolerant of various soils and moderate shade, and often forms dense stands suppressing growth of other species.

Wild tobacco is a coloniser of disturbed sites, and germination of soil-stored seed is stimulated by fire. In north Queensland, the species can act as a pioneer cover tree in rainforest successions, particularly on fertile soils. All parts of the plant are poisonous to humans, especially the green berries. However, the ripe fruit is sometimes a food source for birds.

## Legal requirements

Wild tobacco is not a prohibited or restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. However, by law, everyone has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take reasonable and practical steps to minimise the risks associated with invasive plants under their control.

Local governments must have a biosecurity plan that covers invasive plants in their area. This plan may include actions to be taken on certain species. Some of these actions may be required under local laws.



**Queensland**  
Government

## Description

Wild tobacco is a shrub that grows up to 4 m. The trunk is grey-green, woody to 15 cm in diameter.

Leaves are lance-shaped, up to 30 cm long and 10 cm wide, yellowish-green above, paler beneath and densely covered with 'felty' hairs. Leaves are tapered at both ends, with short, thick stalks and two stipules at the leaf base and smell when crushed.

Flowers are lavender-blue, with yellow stamens in compact clusters at the ends of the branches. Fruit are small, 10–15 mm wide, round and turn from green to yellow as they ripen. Containing 150–200 seeds per fruit. Seeds are light brown or yellowish, 1.5–2 mm long.

## Control

### Manual control

Ring bark tall plants as close to the ground as possible. Pull out seedlings in the wet season when the soil is soft.

Be aware that some people react to the fine hairs that become airborne when working with this weed. Cover your arms and mouth.

### Herbicide control

Several herbicides are currently registered for the control of wild tobacco in Queensland.

See Table 1 for the treatment options.

### Follow up

Check treated areas regularly for new seedlings and regrowth.

### Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or visit [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

**Table 1. Herbicides for the control of wild tobacco**

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Comments
Agricultural non-crop areas, commercial and industrial areas, forests, pastures and rights-of-way	Triclopyr 300 g/L + picloram 100 g/L (e.g. Conqueror) or Triclopyr 300 g/L + picloram 100 g/L + aminopyralid 8 g/L (Grazon Extra)	350 mL per 100 L water	High volume foliar spray Spray plants up to 2 m tall during spring to autumn Pasture legumes including lucerne, clover and medics may be damaged unless well protected by grasses
		500 mL/10 L water	Low volume high concentration foliar application (gas powered gun, sprinkler sprayer)
Pastures, rights-of-way, industrial	2,4-D amine 625 g/L and other formulations (many trade names)	240 mL per 15 L water For other formulations consult label	Cut stump Swab or cut stump within 1 hour of cutting Apply by pouring can or knapsack
Non-crop areas, including: native vegetation, conservation areas, gullies, reserves and parks	Picloram 44.7 g/L + aminopyralid 4.47 g/L (Vigilant II)	Use undiluted	Cut stump Apply 3–5 mm layer over lower cut surface
Agricultural non-crop areas, commercial and industrial areas, fence lines, forestry, pastures and rights-of-way	Triclopyr 240 g/L + picloram 120 g/L (e.g. Access)	1 L/60 L diesel	Cut stump Basal bark Consult label for detailed instructions

**Read the label carefully before use. Always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.**

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Fact sheets are available from Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) service centres and our Customer Service Centre (telephone 13 25 23). Check our website at [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au) to ensure you have the latest version of this fact sheet. The control methods referred to in this fact sheet should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation, and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the use of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, DAF does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.

