

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 and animals under their control.

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



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

There is no herbicide currently registered for control of wild tobacco in Queensland; however, an off-label use permit allows the use of various herbicides for the control of environmental weeds in non-agricultural areas, bushland and forests.

See Table 1 for treatment options allowed by the permit.

Prior to using the herbicides listed under PER11463 you must read or have read to you and understand the conditions of the permit. To obtain a copy of this permit visit www.apvma.gov.au

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 www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au.

Table 1. Herbicides for the control of wild tobacco

| Method | Herbicide | Rate | Comments |
|---|---|--|--|
| Foliar spray | Triclopyr 300 g/L + picloram 100 g/L | 350 mL per 100 L water | Spray plants up to 2 m tall during spring to autumn |
| Foliar spray | 2,4-D amine 500 g/L | 300 mL per 15 L water | Pasture legumes including lucerne, clover and medics may be damaged unless well protected by grasses |
| Cut stump | 2,4-D as 500 g/L or 625 g/L or 720 g/L | 0.2–0.3 L/15 L water | APVMA permit PER11463 Permit expires 30/06/2018 |
| Cut stump; basal bark | 2,4-D 300 g/L | 1 L/40 L kerosine | |
| High volume (HV) spray Low volume (LV) spray | Picloram 100 g/L + triclopyr 300 g/L | (HV) 350 mL/100 L water (LV) 500 L/10 L water | |
| Cut stump | Picloram 43 g/kg | Apply 5 mm layer over lower cut surface | |
| Cut stump; basal bark | Triclopyr as butotyl 240 g/L + picloram 120 g/L | 1 L/60 L diesel | |

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 www.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.

