Mimosa bush

*Acacia farnesiana*

Mimosa bush can spread readily and grow quickly. As it often forms thorny thickets, it can be a considerable nuisance during mustering and can also hinder stock access to water.

Mimosa does offer shade in open downs country and can be useful as a supplement to grass during the dry season. It may therefore be a useful plant in some areas if its spread can be controlled to prevent thicket formation. The maintenance of healthy pasture competition is the best mechanism to achieve this.

Legal requirements

Mimosa bush 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. Contact your local government for more information.
Description

Mimosa bush is a rounded shrub or small tree generally growing 2 to 3 m high, occasionally to 5 m. It often forms thorny thickets, and is nearly always multi-stemmed. The branches grow in a zigzag shape and are usually a grey-brown colour with prominent white spots.

Leaves are a ferny type, with 1–6 pairs of leaf ‘branches’ each with 5–20 pairs of narrow, rounded leaflets 4–8 mm long. Leaves are sometimes more of a yellowish green than a pure green. Thorns are found in pairs at the base of each leaf and can grow up to 10 cm long.

Golden yellow to orangeish flowers are ball-shaped, about 1 cm across, and grow on stalks, usually two stalks at the base of each leaf. Flowers develop into clusters of cigar-shaped pods, slightly curved and up to 6 cm long. The pods are dark brown or black and woody at maturity, with seeds embedded in the pith. Pods do no split open and tend to stay on the plant for a length of time.

Mimosa bush can be confused with the declared weeds mesquite (Prosopis spp.) and prickly acacia (Vachellia nilotica), particularly when young (see the ‘identification of prickle bushes’ fact sheet from www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

Distribution

Mimosa bush, a native of central and south America, is naturalised in Australia. Mimosa bush is widespread in Queensland, and found in all but the wettest and driest parts of the State. Seeds sprout readily and plants grow rapidly. Mimosa bush does well in dry localities and on loamy or sandy soils, forming thickets along watercourses. Mimosa bush withstands drought well, is readily eaten by stock, and has good regrowth after grazing.

Mimosa bush is not a long-lived plant. It is readily attacked by many native insects and is prone to dieback on an irregular basis. In some parts of the world mimosa bush is cultivated for perfume production.

Control

Basal bark spray

For stems up to 15 cm diameter, carefully spray completely around base of plant to a height of 30 cm above ground level. Thoroughly spray into all crevices. Larger trees may be controlled by spraying to a greater height, up to 100 cm above ground level.

The best time for treatment is during autumn when plants are actively growing and soil moisture is good.

Cut stump treatment

At any time of year, cut stems off horizontally as close to the ground as possible. Immediately (within 15 seconds) swab cut surface with herbicide mixture.

Bore drains

Channels and drains must be empty of water. Spray a one metre strip into the mud in channel or drain. Wait at least three days for diuron to bond to mud before slowly allowing water in again. Water must not be used in domestic water supply or supplied to desirable shade trees for 7–14 days after re-opening the drain.

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 mimosa bush

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Optimum time</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basal bark/ cut stump</td>
<td>Fluroxypyr eg. Starane Advanced®, etc</td>
<td>Refer to product label</td>
<td>Basal bark: for plants up to 5 cm basal diameter</td>
<td>Ensure all stems on multi-stemmed plants are treated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triclpyr + picloram e.g. Access®</td>
<td>1 L/60 L diesel</td>
<td>Basal bark: for plants up to 5 cm basal diameter</td>
<td>For use in pastures, roadside and rights of way. Application just prior to rainfall gives best results. Avoid damage to off target species – refer to herbicide label for product restraints and critical comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil application</td>
<td>Tebuthiuron (PERMIT 13891) e.g. Tebulan 200GR herbicide®, Graslan herbicide®, etc</td>
<td>2.0 g/m2 or 20 kg/ha</td>
<td>For use in pastures, roadside and rights of way. Full covering of foliage with spray is essential. Withholding period: do not graze treated areas, or cut for stock feed, for seven days after application.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High volume spray</td>
<td>500 g/L clopyralid present as the triisopropanol amine (PERMIT 11638) e.g. Lontrel herbicide®, Nufarm Archer®, Farmoz Victory herbicide®, etc</td>
<td>500 mL of product per 100 L of water (plus non-ionic surfactant at 0.1%)</td>
<td>Spray when plants are actively growing and in full leaf</td>
<td>For use in pastures, rights of way, powerline areas. Withholding period: do not graze treated areas, or cut for stock feed, for seven days after application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bore drains</td>
<td>Diuron e.g. Diuron 500SC®, etc</td>
<td>Refer to product label</td>
<td>Do not apply between 1 December and 30 March each year.</td>
<td>Do not apply more than once per calendar year. Do not open drains for 72 hours following treatment. Do not apply if heavy rains are predicted within three days of application. Application should be limited to 1 m strips along the sides of bore drains. Withholding period – do not allow animals to drink water from treated bore drains for three days, before slaughter for human consumption</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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