

Noogoora burr

Xanthium pungens



Native to America, noogoora burr is an erect, annual herb with blotched purple stems. Noogoora burr is often abundant after spring or summer floods. The burrs tangle in animal fur causing injury

Noogoora burr is found along river and creek flats, on roadsides and in pasture land following seasonal rain or floods.

The burrs readily contaminate wool, significantly reducing the value of the wool due to increased processing costs. Thick patches of noogoora burr may deny sheep access to watering points. Noogoora burr is also a serious competitor in pastures and summer crops.

Seedlings are poisonous to domestic stock, causing death if eaten in sufficient quantities.

Legal requirements

Noogoora burr 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. Contact your local government for more information.



Description

Noogoora burr is an shrub upright to 1 m high, occasionally 2.5 m high, short lived, usually an annual. The stems are green blotched purple and covered with stiff hairs. Leaves are dark green on upper surface, 15 cm in diameter and roughly textured with minute bristles. Lower leaves are arranged opposite while upper leaves are alternate. Flowers are greenish yellow and inconspicuous, separate male and female appearing in leaf axils towards the end of the branches. Fruit is hard, woody, spiny burrs, 1.2–2 cm long with hooked spines containing two seeds. Seeds are grey or black 4–5 mm long and 5–7 mm wide. They are flattened on one side, and one seed in each pair is usually slightly larger than the other

Habitat and distribution

Noogoora burr is widespread in Queensland, occurring in tropical regions and the central and western regions (where it prefers alluvial flood plains).

It can be found along river and creek flats, on roadsides and in pasture land. Noogoora burr spreads by seed in burrs. Burrs are spread by attaching to animals, clothing and bags. Burrs can also float on water.

Control

As noogoora burr is an annual, infestations will be reduced if seeding can be prevented.

Biological control

Some level of control has been achieved with biological control agents including stem-boring and stem-galling insects, and a rust fungus (*Puccinia xanthii*). This form of control has been more effective in tropical areas where temperatures and moisture conditions are favourable.

Mechanical control

Cultivation or hand pulling isolated plants is effective if performed before flowering or burr formation.

Herbicide control

Numerous herbicides are registered for in-crop control of noogoora burr. Consult Biosecurity Queensland or your advisory service for advice on control in different crops.

Fewer products are registered for use in non-crop situations. Before using any herbicide always read the label carefully. All herbicides must be applied strictly in accordance with the directions on the label. Details of herbicides registered for the control of noogoora burr in non-crop situations are listed in Table 1.

Spraying with 2,4-D or MCPA before flowering will give favourable results. As plants mature, higher rates are necessary.

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.

Table 1. Herbicides for the control of noogoora burr

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Comments
Pastures, rights-of-way and industrial	2,4-D amine (multiple products)	Consult label for correct rate	Spot or boom spray Apply to young, actively growing weeds ensuring thorough coverage
Agricultural non-crop areas, rights-of-way, commercial and industrial areas, forests and pastures	Fluroxypyr 200 g/L (e.g. Fluroxypyr 200)	75 mL/100 L water	Seedlings and young plants up to 40 cm high
	Fluroxypyr 333 g/L (e.g. Starane)	45 mL/100 L water	
	Fluroxypyr 400 g/L (e.g. Fluroxypyr 400)	38 mL/100 L	
Non-agricultural areas around buildings, commercial and industrial areas, domestic and public service areas, rights-of-way	Glyphosate 360g/L and other formulations	10 mL/ L water (360 g/L formulation) For other formulations consult label	Spot spray
Non-crop areas, fallow land, industrial and commercial areas, rights-of-way	MCPA 500 g/L (e.g. MCPA 500) and other formulations	2 L/ha 200 mL/150 L water/1000 m ² Consult label for other formulations	Spray young seedlings only
Clover and medic pastures	2,4-DB 500 g/L (e.g. Buttress)	200–400 mL/100L water 1–3.2 L/ha	Spray seedlings at the 2–4 leaf stage

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 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.

