Sticky florestina
Florestina tripteris

Sticky florestina is a short-lived annual plant accidently introduced to Australia in contaminated pasture grass seed in mid 1960s. Sticky florestina can invade native rangelands and pastures.

All parts of the plant are toxic and unpalatable to grazing animals. It is abundant and considered ‘weedy’ within its native range, where it prefers sandy soils.

Sticky florestina can be confused with parthenium which also has small white flowers. It is important land managers are able to distinguish between them.

Legal requirements
Sticky florestina 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
Sticky florestina is a member of the Asteraceae family and grows up to 1 m high. Lower leaves are simple and opposite, whereas upper leaves are trifoliate (rarely with five leaflets) and alternate. Leaves are pubescent, mostly 2–5 cm long and 1–2 cm wide. Sticky florestina has numerous flower heads with small white, sometimes pink to purplish coloured flowers. The entire plant is covered in very short sticky white hairs.
Habitat and distribution
Sticky florestina prefers semi-arid climate. It is found mostly along roadsides, water-courses, stock routes and disturbed or overgrazed areas, occurring on various soils from near sea level to about 900 m. It is quick to colonise open, disturbed sites and can become abundant along recently graded roads and fence lines.

Sticky florestina is native to northern America (southern Texas and Mexico).

Currently exists over more than 60 000 ha in Tambo and Barcaldine Shires in western Queensland.

Life cycle
Sticky florestina is well-adapted to survive prolonged dry conditions experienced in semi-arid climates. Its seeds only germinate after rain and the plant can complete its life-cycle in 3–4 weeks while sufficient soil-moisture is available. Within its native range it flowers mainly in summer and autumn, but can flower throughout the year.

Longevity of sticky florestina seed is expected to be approximately two years.

Spread
Sticky florestina produces hundreds of sticky seeds which are easily spread by stock, native animals, vehicles, machinery and people. Its seeds are also believed to be dispersed down waterways.

Prevention
Identify and treat any new infestations promptly before seed can be set. Prevent seed spread by minimising contact with seeding plants. Ensure to brush down clothing, empty boots, clean down vehicles, machinery and equipment before leaving infested areas.

Control
Herbicide control
One herbicide, Tordon RegrowthMaster, is registered for control of sticky florestina in Queensland. In addition a minor use permit, PER11920, allows the use of certain other products. To obtain the permit go to apvma.gov.au.

Before using any herbicide, always read the label carefully. All herbicides must be applied strictly in accordance with the directions on the label. Table 1 details the herbicides registered or permitted for sticky florestina control.

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 sticky florestina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural non-crop areas, commercial and industrial areas</td>
<td>2,4-D 300 g/L + picloram 75 g/L + aminopyralid 7.5 g/L (FallowBoss Tordon)</td>
<td>3 L/ha plus uptake spraying oil at 500 mL/100 L water</td>
<td>Registered Apply to actively growing seedling plants with rosette up to 10 cm in diameter Consult label for details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pastures, stock routes, roadsides and non-crop situations</td>
<td>Metsulfuron-methyl 600 g/kg (e.g. Brush-off, Associate)</td>
<td>Spot spray: 5 g product/100 L water Apply at spray volume of 600 L/ha High volume (boom) Spray: 30 g product/ha</td>
<td>Permit PER11920 Foliar spray application Thoroughly wet all foliage to the point of run-off Always apply with suitable wetting agent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2,4-D Amine 300 g/L plus Picloram 75 g/L (e.g. Tordon 75-D)</td>
<td>Spot spray: 500 mL product/100 L water Apply at spray volume of 600 L/ha High volume (boom) Spray: 3 L product/ha</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>For seedlings only</td>
<td>2,4-D Amine 500 g/L e.g. (2,4-D Amine 500 Low)</td>
<td>Spot spray: 400 mL product/100 L water Apply at spray volume of 600 L/ha High volume (boom) Spray: 2.4 L product/ha</td>
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</table>

- Apply by ground based application equipment only.
- If repeat application is required, rotate between herbicides options.
- DO NOT re-apply a spray treatment for at least 40 days after initial application.
- DO NOT make more than two herbicide applications per wet season.
- Timing of spray application depends on rainfall; spray actively growing plants following initial significant rain event or before any new plants reach reproductive maturity.
- Avoid spraying legumes and non-target plant species in pastures.
- Avoid drift – DO NOT spray in windy or high temperature conditions.

Read the label carefully before use. Always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.
Comparsions between sticky florestina and parthenium

Sticky florestina flowers

Parthenium flowers

Sticky florestina infestation

Parthenium infestation

Sticky florestina seedling

Parthenium seedling

This fact sheet is developed with funding support from the Land Protection Fund.

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.

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