

Green cestrum (*Cestrum parqui*)

Weed management guide

Weed type
Shrub

November 2022

www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west



In NSW, weeds are regulated by the NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015. All land managers have a General Biosecurity Duty to contain the spread of weeds.

“General Biosecurity Duty means that any person dealing with plant matter must take measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate the biosecurity risk (as far as is reasonably practicable).”

The Regional priority for Green cestrum is to protect assets from the weed’s impacts and to prevent its arrival and establishment in the region. In order to achieve this, Land Managers are asked to: *Mitigate the risk of new weeds being introduced to their land and reduce impacts on priority assets. The plant should not be bought, sold, grown, carried or released into the environment.*

For further information, contact your local Biosecurity (Weeds) Officer via Central West Local Land Services or visit NSW WeedWise.

NSW WeedWise



Habit and description

Green cestrum is a shrub that can grow up to 3m high. It has many brittle stems which are light green in color. The leaves are lanceolate and about 8-10cm long and 1-3cm wide. Flowers look like trumpets and are yellow in colour. The fruits of this plant appear like egg-shaped berries which change from green to black as it ripens. It commonly occurs near waterways and prefers loamy or clayey soils. It is frost tolerant and can grow in a wide range of soil types and rainfall. During winter, most of its leaves are shed but new growth occurs once spring sets in.



Photo: © G. Wisemantel | NSW DPI



Photo: © G. Wisemantel | NSW DPI



Photo: © G. Wisemantel | NSW DPI



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Reproduction and spread

Green cestrum reproduce via seeds and through suckering. Birds usually eat the fruit and spread its seeds far away from the shrub. Root segments can also be carried by water (flood) or by machinery (contaminated soil).

Impacts

Agriculture



- Green cestrum is toxic to livestock, domestic pets and humans. Cattle are particularly vulnerable.
- Livestock who have eaten the plant will have its milk tainted.
- Direct contact with the plant can cause skin rashes.

Native vegetation



- The plant outcompetes other vegetation. When it forms dense stands, it inhibits access to waterways and prevents the establishment of native plants (Witt and Luke, 2017).
- As it continues its infestation, it also reduces the potential source of food for native fauna.

Management

Chemical



- Herbicide application is effective, however livestock must be removed from areas of control as the wilting of plants makes it more palatable.
- Seek the guidance of an experienced Weeds Officer for expert advice on herbicide use.
- Visit www.apvma.gov.au for a list of registered products, product labels and permit requirements.
- NSW DPI (2021) provides a list of recommended herbicides for the control of Green cestrum at <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/GreenCestrum>.

Non-chemical



- Non-chemical controls ideally must be done before or at flowering to prevent the plant from bearing fruit. This will eliminate berries which birds eat and from which Green cestrum spreads. The same strategy applies in chemical control.
- Whether one uses hand removal for smaller plants or mechanical removal for larger ones, the roots of the plant must be thoroughly destroyed/uprooted to prevent regrowth. The roots of the plant can also be burned.
- Dense pastures are effective in suppressing seedlings of Green cestrum.

Management calendar

| | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Life cycle | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fruiting | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Germination pos. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Germination | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dormant in heat | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rapid growth | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Flowering | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Germination possible | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rapid growth | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Management tools | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Non-chemical controls:</p> <p>Hand removal (for small seedlings, ensure all parts including roots are removed)</p> <p>Mechanical removal (repeated cutting, digging or pushing out; destroy yellow roots to prevent regrowth)</p> <p>Competition (from dense pastures)</p> <p>Disposal (burning of roots, contact council for disposal)</p> <p><i>Always use protective equipment as all parts of the plant are poisonous.</i></p> <p>Herbicide can be applied to the plant at different stages of growth and densities:</p> <p>Spot spraying (different herbicides are suitable for different sizes)</p> <p>Basal bark (plants with stems up to 5cm at base)</p> <p>Cut stump (Liquid herbicide: apply to stem cut less than 15cm from ground; Gel herbicide: apply to stem cut less than 10cm from ground)</p> <p>Cut scrape and paint (Cut stem and scrape a thin layer of bark. Apply herbicide within 15 seconds)</p> <p><i>Application of herbicide is ideal during early spring (mature plants) and autumn (new seedlings). Larger plants are better controlled before or at flowering.</i></p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Optimal control options may vary depending on your location and climate. Consult an experienced Weeds Officer based in your local government area for control methods suited to your conditions.

All herbicides must be used in accordance with the herbicide label and permit requirements.

NSW WeedWise



Further information

For more information on your general biosecurity duties, visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity.

For the best guidance on how to meet this duty on your property, contact your expert Weeds Officer at your local council or via Local Land Services www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/central-west.

References

NSW DPI. (2021). *NSW WeedWise*. <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/GreenCestrum>

Witt, A., & Luke, Q. (2017). *Guide to the naturalized and invasive plants of Eastern Africa*. Wallingford: CAB International. <https://www.cabi.org/isc/FullTextPDF/2017/20173158959.pdf>

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