

Sticky florestina

Florestina tripteris



Sticky florestina is a short-lived annual plant accidentally 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 sticky florestina. 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.

Table 1. Herbicides for the control of sticky florestina

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Comments
Agricultural non-crop areas, commercial and industrial areas, pastures, rights-of-way	2,4-D 300 g/L + picloram 75 g/L + aminopyralid 7.5 g/L (FallowBoss® Tordon®)	3 L/ha plus Uptake® spraying oil at 500 mL/100 L water	Registered Apply to actively growing seedling plants with rosette up to 10 cm in diameter Consult label for details
Pastures, stock routes, roadsides and non-crop situations	Metsulfuron-methyl 600 g/kg (e.g. Brush-off, Associate)	Spot spray: 5 g product/100 L water Apply at spray volume of 600 L/ha High volume (boom) spray or aerial: 30 g product/ha	Permit PER88624 Foliar spray application Thoroughly wet all foliage to the point of run-off
	For seedlings only 2,4-D Amine 625g/L formulation	Spot spray: 325 mL product/100 L water Apply at spray volume of 600 L/ha High volume (boom) spray: 2 L product/ha	Always apply with suitable wetting agent

- Apply by ground-based application equipment only, except metsulfuron-methyl can be applied aerially.
- 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.
- Grazing withholding periods as per herbicide labels.

Read the label carefully before use. Always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.

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

FallowBoss® Tordon® is registered for control of sticky florestina in Queensland. In addition a minor use permit, PER88624, 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.

Comparisons 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.