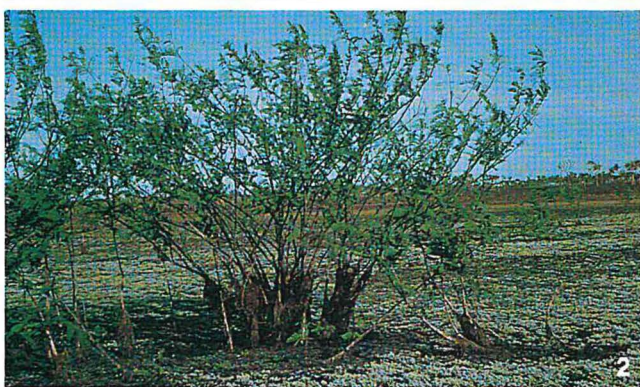


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GIANT SENSITIVE PLANT



1. Seed pods & flowers. 2. Mature plant. 3. Leaves. 4. Seedling. 5. Seeds.

GIANT SENSITIVE PLANT

GIANT SENSITIVE PLANT (*Mimosa pigra*) is a leguminous shrub originating in Brazil and tropical America. Infestations occur in the Northern Territory, where it is declared a Category A noxious weed (eradication). No infestations are known in W.A. but it appears to be a potential threat to the river valleys of tropical north Western Australia. Giant sensitive plant resembles Parkinsonia and Mesquite in its aggressive growth habit. It forms dense spiny thickets, shades out pastures and prevents access to water by stock and man.

Description:

Giant sensitive plant forms a bush up

to 3m tall. It emerges as a single stem, branching as it approaches maturity. The stems have thorns similar to roses from 6 to 10mm long and are covered with short hard hairs giving them a rough texture. The leaves are compound with opposite pairs of about 15 leaflets which fold towards the central leaf vein when touched or at nightfall. The flowers are mauve to pink, round fluffy balls approximately 10-20cm in diameter, similar in appearance to other members of the Mimosa family. Each flower produces 10 to 20 flattened pods which break up when mature into segments each containing a single olive green oblong seed about 4 x 2mm in size.

Ecology:

Giant sensitive plant is a perennial which seeds prolifically when only six months old. Hairs on the pod segments entrap air which allows them to float on water or helps them to stick to hair and clothing during dispersal.

For further information on Giant sensitive plant, recognition and control, contact the Agriculture Protection Board, telephone (09) 367 0111 or any country officer of the Agriculture Protection Board or the Department of Agriculture.