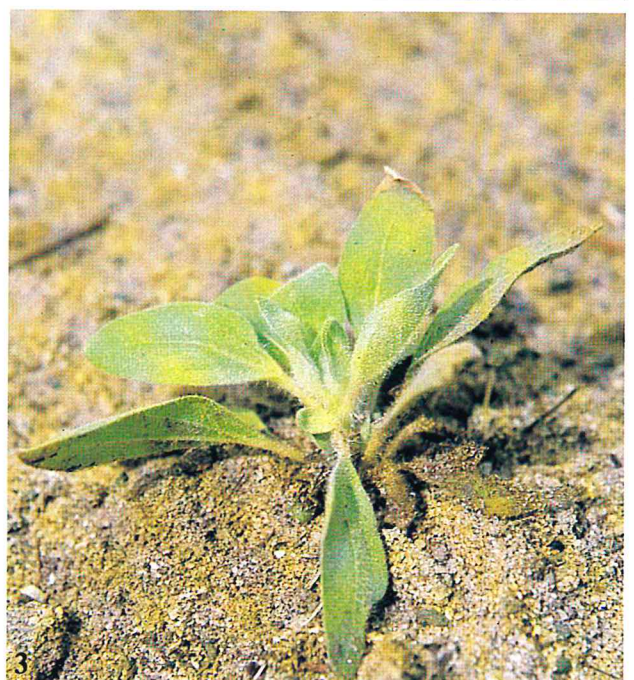


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DOVEWEED



1. Mature plant 2. Flowers and Fruits. 3. Seedling.

(continued overleaf)

DOVEWEED

DOVEWEED (*Eremocarpus setigerus Benth*) is a member of the spurge family. It is a native of coastal areas in California where it is known as Turkey Mullein. Doveweed occurs sporadically in the agricultural areas of Western Australia. It is a declared plant (noxious weed) throughout the State.

Ecology:

Doveweed is an annual plant germinating in spring and maturing over summer. Doveweed will grow on dry sandy soil once the plant has got beyond the seedling stage. Persistent clumps are found after summer rainfall or in summer moist areas.

Spread is by seed only, but the weed has no specialised methods of seed dispersal.

Significance:

Doveweed is unpalatable to stock and may form fibrous 'hair balls' in the rumen of sheep and cattle forced to eat it. A thick matt of plants may form over the land which interferes with cultivation of the paddock.

Description:

Doveweed is a low spreading plant up to 0.3 m high and 0.6 m in diameter. The thick fleshy stems have many branches. The leaves are grey-green with a dense covering of star shaped bristles which may cause skin irritation. The leaves are thick and oval to almost round in shape, with slender leaf stalks.

When crushed, the plant has a strong, sweet unpleasant odour.

Doveweed has small inconspicuous flowers. Male flowers cluster at the ends of branches, while female

flowers are formed in the angles of lower leaves. Only one fruit is formed in each female flower. Each fruit consists of a hairy capsule containing one smooth brown mottled or grey seed about 3 mm long.

Prompt action is necessary to control infestations and to prevent the spread of Doveweed to new areas.

For identification of suspected plants contact the Agriculture Protection Board, Telephone Perth (09) 367 0111 or any country officer of the Agriculture Protection Board or the Department of Agriculture.