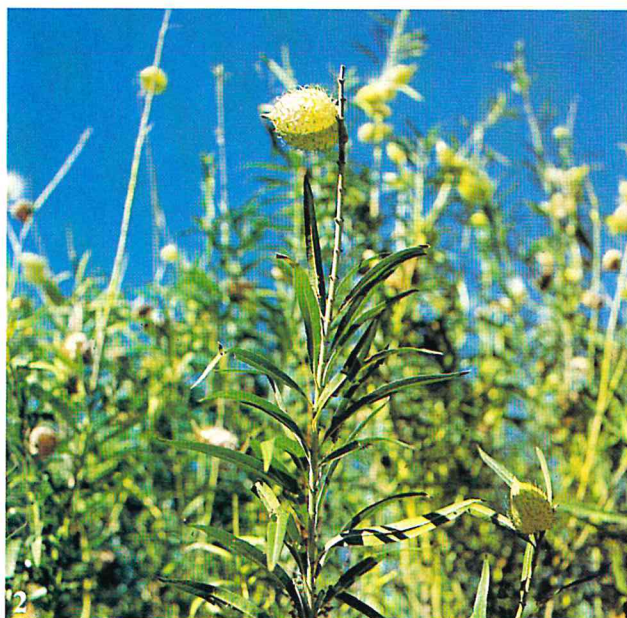


# NARROWLEAF COTTON BUSH

Agriculture Protection Board  
Advisory Leaflet No. 52  
October 1979  
Agdex No. 647



1. Dense thicket 2. Fruit 3. Young Plant.

(continued overleaf)

# NARROWLEAF COTTON BUSH

**Gomphocarpus  
fruticosus**

**C**OTTON bush is a member of the milkweed family. It originated in South Africa and was first noticed in 1894 as a garden plant in NSW. It is a serious weed in part of South Australia. Occasional outbreaks have been observed in gullies in the Darling Range of Western Australia. Cotton bush is toxic to cattle, sheep and pigs but is seldom eaten. It is mainly a weed of roadsides waste land and overgrazed pastures.

## **Ecology**

Cotton bush is a perennial plant. Spread is by means of the seed which may be carried by stock, water vehicles and hay and silage.

## **Description**

Cotton bush is an erect slender shrub 1.2 to 2.5 m high. The leaves are bright green, narrow and lancelike in shape. The flowers are white and drooping, formed in small groups of 3 to 10.

The fruit is large and bladder like,

pointed at one end. It splits to reveal long feathery white hairs attached to the seed.

Prompt action is necessary to control infestations and to prevent the spread of Cotton bush 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.*