

YELLOW BURR WEED CONTROL



Yellow burr weed, also commonly called *Amsinckia*, is a weed of the borage family, like Paterson's curse and common heliotrope. Four closely related species: *Amsinckia calycina*, *A. intermedia*, *A. menziesii* and *A. lycopsoides* are found in Australia but only *A. calycina* and *A. lycopsoides* are found in WA.

It is a serious weed in North America and the eastern states of Australia. Several small outbreaks have been found in WA and because of its potential to become a major weed problem it is a declared plant throughout the state. Anyone having the weed on his or her property is obliged to destroy it.

Yellow burr weed is adapted to a wide range of soils. It is a problem in winter cereals and overgrazed pastures, especially under dry conditions. It competes with the crop in the early stages and drastically reduces yields, even if sprayed.

It is also poisonous; it contains a liver toxin which has killed grazing horses and pigs fed on contaminated seeds. However, sheep appear to be tolerant of the plant.

Yellow burr weed is an annual plant which germinates after autumn rain. Up to four germinations may take place during one season. It flowers in spring, producing a large number of seeds. The seeds have a hairy husk which aids their spread attached to clothes, wool or hair. It is also spread in contaminated crop seeds.

The seedling has two Y-shaped dull green cotyledons (seed leaves) covered with hairs growing from raised areas of the surface. The true leaves are lance-shaped, up to 20 cm long and covered with short stiff hairs on both sides. The petioles (leaf stalks) are longer on basal leaves. Upper leaves have short flat petioles and the leaves look as though they clasp the stem.

The stems are slender, erect and branched although they may branch less in dense stands of the weed. The flowers vary from yellow to orange. They are formed on one side of a curled spike which opens out as the plant matures.

The seeds are 3 mm to 4 mm long and contained in a husk covered with stiff bristles.

Control

Cultivation and grubbing

May be controlled by repeated cultivation, but this not practicable in crops and may create an erosion hazard in non-crop situations.

Chemical control

Bromoxynil/MCPA mixture such as Brominil M[®] Bucрил MA[®], Bromoxynil MA[®] or Homyx[®]

BOOMSPRAY: 1.4 litres of product per hectare.

Apply when the crop is between the three and six leaf stage. Where the weed is more than 5 cm in diameter increase the dose to 2.0 litres per hectare. Effective in crops.

Glean[®]

BOOMSPRAY: 15g per hectare.

Pre-sowing or post emergence. Effective in crops.

Terbutyne (Igran[®]) + MCPA

BOOMSPRAY: 550 ml + 600 ml per hectare.

Effective in crops.

Glyphosate 420g/litre

KNAPSACK: 10 ml per litre

Individual plants may be spot-sprayed

2,4-D ester

Large pasture infestations may be treated by spraygrazing.

This is unlikely to be suitable for the small infestations known to exist in WA.

Further Information

For advice in drawing up a yellow burr weed control programme for your property contact your nearest Agriculture Protection Board district officer.