

Invasive plants and animals

## Leucaena

*Leucaena leucocephala*



### The problem

Established stands of leucaena form dense thickets, hindering the movement of wildlife and excluding all other plants. It has been planted for fodder in many tropical areas of the world, including Queensland where an introduced stomach bug prevents ruminant problems, but horses lose hair if too much is eaten. It is also used for shade, firewood and as a soil stabiliser. Unless it is heavily grazed or otherwise controlled, it is able to rapidly spread to adjacent areas.

Native to Central and South America, leucaena is also listed as a weed in New Guinea, Hawaii, western Polynesia and the United States of America. This weed has naturalised throughout many areas of the Australian mainland and on a number of off-shore islands. It has been seen to invade many disturbed sites and creek lines and may have suppressed the regeneration of native species.

## Description

Leucaena is a small tree up to about 6 m tall. Leaves are about 25 cm long and bipinnate, with dull, greyish-green leaflets. Flower heads are spherical and creamy yellow in colour on short stalks about 5 cm long. Flattened pods up to 15 cm long occur in dense clusters, each pod containing around 20 glossy brown, flat seeds that scatter when ripe.

## Management strategies

Small individual plants may be manually removed, taking care to remove the roots. Controlled grazing before it grows out of cattles' reach controls it. On larger specimens or infestations, this option will probably not be feasible.

## Declaration details

Leucaena is not a declared plant under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*, however, plants that are not declared under state legislation may have control requirements imposed by local governments.

## Further information

Further information is available from the vegetation management/weed control/environmental staff at your local government.

**TABLE 1 – HERBICIDES REGISTERED FOR THE CONTROL OF LEUCAENA**

Method	Herbicide	Rate	Registration status
Basal bark	triclopyr (240 g/L) + picloram (120 g/L) e.g. Access®	1 L per 60 L diesel (for plants with stem diameter <5 cm)	Registered
Cut and paint	triclopyr (240 g/L) + picloram (120 g/L)	1 L per 60 L diesel	Registered
Foliar spray	triclopyr (300 g/L) and picloram (120 g/L) e.g. Grazon DS®	350 mL per 100 L water	Registered A DPI permit is required for Shires of Caboolture, Caloundra, Maroochy, Noosa and Pine Rivers because of environmental concerns with picloram.

Read the label carefully before use and always use the herbicide in accordance with label directions.