

MEDIA STATEMENT

17 January 2024

Help Weed Out Sticky Florestina from the Central West

Central West Queensland, we have a sticky problem and need your help.

An invasive, toxic weed species, Sticky Florestina (*Florestina tripteris*), is on the move in the region.

First cropping up in the Central West in Blackall in the 1960s, the weed is currently confirmed in Blackall-Tambo, Barcaldine and Longreach council areas.

Even though Sticky Florestina is not yet a declared prohibited/ restricted species like Parthenium, it is toxic to stock and can invade native pastures and timber areas, posing a particular threat to our region.

Chair of the Central West Region Pest Partnership Group (CWRPPG), Jeffrey Newton, said concern about the weed had increased with an accelerated rate of spread over last twelve months.

“With good rain received around our region, we had perfect conditions for the weed to spring up and potentially get a foothold in new locations. Even with dry conditions, as it dies Sticky Florestina can still manage to set hundreds of seeds per plant, ready to germinate and flourish with any moisture we manage to get in the summer season.”

“We usually see it along roads and fence lines, but we’re also seeing it in isolated scrub areas on properties, raising our concerns that this toxic nasty could be flourishing and increasing its spread unreported.

“The grazing industry is the largest economic sector in the Central West and generates millions, so tackling weeds like Sticky Florestina that can harm livestock, native pastures and production is of high priority.

Mr Newton encouraged local landholders to be familiar with the weed so that when it does crop up it can be dealt with as soon as possible, helping to minimise potential spread and impacts of the toxic weed.

“Understanding weed hygiene and ways to minimise movement of seeds is also important. If you see or suspect Sticky Florestina, please contact your Rural Lands-Officer as soon as possible and ensure that all vehicles and machinery are washed down as per your Biosecurity Obligations,” Mr Newton said.

“With the weed cropping up in public areas like roadsides, those working and travelling in our region can also help by being familiar and to ensure early detection and action.

Sticky Florestina has small white, sometimes pink to purplish coloured flowers. The entire plant is covered in very short, sticky white hairs and can be confused with Parthenium weed. Both plants have a similar flower, however the Parthenium plant forms a rosette type leaf structure.

The Central West Region Pest Partnership Group (CWRPPG) is made up of Rural Lands Officers and CEOs from RAPAD’s seven member councils and representatives from Desert Channels Queensland, AgForce, Transport and Main Roads, and Biosecurity Queensland.

For more information please visit: https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/72378/sticky-florestina.pdf

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