

# Water mimosa

*Neptunia oleracea* or *Neptunia plena*



Water mimosa poses an extreme threat to Queensland's waterways and wetlands. It establishes from small plant pieces in water and from seed. Under favourable conditions, water mimosa grows out from the banks to form floating rafts of dense interwoven stems. These can be dislodged by water movement (especially during floods) and are soon replaced by more water mimosa.

These floating rafts can:

- restrict water flow in creeks, channels and drains
- impede recreational water sports and boating access
- increase water loss through evapotranspiration
- reduce water quality by preventing light penetration and reducing oxygenation of water
- create a favourable habitat for mosquitoes
- reduce fish activity
- cause the death of native, submerged water plants and fish
- replace native wetland plants.



## Declaration details

Water mimosa is a declared Class 1 plant under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*. Declaration requires landholders to keep their land free of Class 1 pests. It is a serious offence to introduce, keep or sell Class 1 pests without a permit. A local government may serve a notice upon a landholder requiring control of declared pests.

## Description and general information

### Appearance

Water mimosa is an aquatic floating perennial herb that attaches to the bank at the waters edge and sends down a taproot. Stems grow out over the water and form a spongy, fibrous covering between the nodes. Fibrous (adventitious) roots grow from the nodes. The rooted land form has smaller leaves and flowers, and has no spongy floating tissue.

### Leaves

Leaves are olive green and are arranged in opposite pairs along the stem. When disturbed or touched the leaflets close up.



### Flowers

Water mimosa flowers are yellow, ball-shaped and grow from the base of the leaves. Flowering begins in early summer.

### Life cycle

Water mimosa can grow from seeds and from sections of stem that break free from the parent plant.

### Habitat and distribution

Water mimosa takes root on the banks of watercourses and grows out over the water surface, forming floating rafts. Within its native range, water mimosa is a common floating plant in freshwater pools, swamps and canals at low altitudes of up to 300 m. When water levels fall during the dry season, the plants often perish. The plants prefer slow-moving water 30–80 cm deep, full sun and hot, humid conditions. Shade, brackish water and saline soil adversely affect plant growth.

*Neptunia oleracea* is accepted as being native to tropical Asia, Africa and South America. It grows wild and is cultivated as a vegetable throughout South-East Asia, particularly Thailand and Indo-China. *Neptunia plena* grows in the coastal regions of southern North America, Central America, northern South America and tropical Asia.

### Control

There are no chemicals registered specifically for use against water mimosa. In most instances, the most appropriate method of control is to physically remove the infestation. This can be done by removing all plant matter from the infested water body and pulling plants out of the surrounding banks, ensuring removal of the attached root system. This should be repeated on a regular basis until regrowth ceases. All removed plant parts should then be disposed of in an appropriate waste facility or rubbish bin.

### Further information

Further information is available from your local government office, or from your local primary industries and fisheries biosecurity officer: contact details are available through 13 25 23.

Fact sheets are available from Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries service centres and the Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries Business Information Centre (telephone 13 25 23). Check our website at [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au) to ensure you have the latest version of this fact sheet. The control methods referred to in this pest fact should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation, and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the use of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.

© The State of Queensland, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, 2009.