

Downy hakea

Hakea gibbosa

Family

Proteaceae (protea)

Also known as

Hakea pubescens

Where is it originally from?

Australia

What does it look like?

Prickly, woody, spreading, evergreen shrub (<3m tall) with hairy stems, and stiff, hairy, needle-like leaves (30-80 x 1 mm) with sharp pointed ends. Small sparse clusters of white flowers (winter-summer) develop into round, woody seed capsules (20-30 x 14-25 mm) with wrinkled surfaces, which contain winged black seeds (30-33 x 10-14 mm).

Are there any similar species?

Hakea sericea (qv) is usually taller, leaves hairy only when young.

Why is it weedy?

Tolerant of fire, damage (not grazed), damp to severe drought, moderate shade, poor soils, and high to cool temperature. Many long-lived seeds and moderately long-lived plants, and forms dense stands, dominating other species in poor soils. May decrease recreational use of an area because of spiny habit.

How does it spread?

Seed is spread by water and soil movement, livestock, and dumped vegetation as well as wind, and fire encourages seed germination.

What damage does it do?

Dominates low shrubland in very low fertility, poor soil habitats. Keeps sites dry, adds to fire risk, causes succession to pampas and grasses. Contributes to local extinction of rare native fern, orchid and shrub species.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Gumlands, shrubland, short tussockland, bare land, fernland, especially burnt sites. Roadsides, open hillsides, shrublands. Prefers open, sunny positions.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Physical removal - Pull or dig seedlings or small plants (all year round).
 2. Cut and paste: Cut the stem/trunk as close to the ground as possible and cover the entire stump with herbicide as soon as possible after cutting. Apply metsulfuron gel (10g/L strength) or picloram gel (43g/L strength) to the entire cut stem.
 3. Basal spray stems up to 20cm diameter with X-Tree Basal. Ensure the base is thoroughly covered at ground level.
 4. Foliar spray (full leaf stage only) - Apply herbicide using a hand held sprayer/knapsack to plants <1m tall or gun and hose for larger infestations. Apply glyphosate (360 g/L active ingredient) herbicide at 20ml/L plus organosilicone penetrant (2ml/L) to cover entire plant. Note: Glyphosate overspray will kill other (desirable) plants OR apply metsulfuron herbicide (600g/kg active ingredient at 0.5g/L knapsack or 20g/100L gun and hose) + organosilicone penetrant (3ml/L). Note: Metsulfuron overspray will kill other (desirable) broadleaf plants and has residual activity in the soil which aids in killing below ground
- Tip:* If leaving for natural succession (8-20 years): can be accelerated by felling plants in sites of dense native vegetation, allowing native species to overtop Hakea. Best in winter to maximise regeneration and



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Photo: Trevor James



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minimise fire risk.

CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and directions for the purchase, use and storage of the product, are followed and adhered to.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Avoid fire at all times, implement fire protection strategy. Most sites can be left to regenerate to native species provided fire can be permanently avoided.