Velvet groundsel

Roldana petasitis

www.weedbusters.org.nz

Family
Asteraceae (daisy)

Also known as
Senecio petasitis

Where is it originally from?
Mexico

What does it look like?
Forms a large, much-branched shrub (<2.5 m high and wide). Large, soft leaves (10-20 cm diameter) are rounded in shape with slightly undulating edges. Both the upper and lower surfaces are covered in short hairs, giving them a velvety texture. Large clusters of small, yellow, daisy-like flowers, with a brownish-yellow centre (Jul-Nov) are followed by fluffy seed heads.

Why is it weedy?
Forms dense cover and stems take root where they touch the ground, forming new plants, developing into a dense thicket.

How does it spread?
Spread via windborne seed and dumped garden waste to localised wild areas near towns and into forest margins. Stems take root where they touch the ground, forming new plants.

What damage does it do?
Spreads easily, forms new plants from stems, and shades out and suppresses native species and other desirable plants.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?
Forest margins, bush remnants, wetlands.

What can I do to get rid of it?
1. Physical removal - dig out or pull small plants before seeding. Dispose of or burn all plant material.
2. Cut and paste (all year round) - 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 either glyphosate gel (120g/L strength) or picloram gel (43g/l strength) to the entire cut stem.
3. Foliar spray - Apply Glyphosate (360 g/L active ingredient) herbicide (20ml/L) plus organosilicone penetrant (2ml/L) to cover entire plant
Note: Non selective. Avoid overspray onto desirable plants OR
Clopyralid herbicide (300g/l active ingredient) at a rate of 12.5ml/L. Clopyralid is a herbicide for selective control on plants in the daisy family and some broadleaf weeds. Do not use over or near water bodies or wetlands
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?
Check after six months for reseeding. Replant the area with dense cover to shade out germinating seedlings.

Photo: Trevor James

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