

Silver wattle

Acacia dealbata

Family

Fabaceae (pea)

Also known as

Racosperma dealbatum

Where is it originally from?

Australia

What does it look like?

Shrub to large tree with suckering roots and ribbed, densely hairy twigs. Frond-like leaves (20-30 cm) are arranged alternately on stems, twice divided along the midribs, with 10-21 pairs of main subdivisions, and 25-40 pairs of bluish, narrow leaflets (2-4 x 1 mm). Clusters of numerous fluffy yellow flowers (Jul-Sep) are followed by straight, hairless seed pods (50-100 x 8-12 mm).

Are there any similar species?

Many *Acacia* species, and *Paraserianthes lophantha*, are similar.

Why is it weedy?

Produces many long-lived seed and suckers when roots are damaged. Grows rapidly, and tolerates hot to cold temperatures, poor soils (fixes own nitrogen), damp to dry conditions, and damage. Possibly allelopathic (able to produce toxins that poison the soil to discourage growth of other plants).

How does it spread?

Limited spread of seed and suckers through soil and water movement. Plantations, waste places and riverbeds are sources of infestations.

What damage does it do?

Forms large, dense, long-lived stands in disturbed habitats. Native forest species establish under wattle so long-term impacts are usually confined to open and low-growing vegetation types. Rotting matter affects water quality. Large stands increase water runoff in winter, less in summer, causing seasonal drought and flooding.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Disturbed forest and shrubland, short tussockland, bare land, river systems, and cliffs.

What can I do to get rid of it?

Only control where wattle is a recent threat, of low incidence or poses a high ecological threat.

1. Hand pull or dig seedlings (all year round). Ensure minimum soil disturbance.
2. Cut and squirt (all year round): Make 1 cut every 100 mm around the trunk, apply 5ml triclopyr 600 EC (undiluted) per cut.
3. Bore and fill (all year round): Make 1 hole every 200 mm around the trunk, apply 3g metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg or 10ml triclopyr 600 EC (undiluted) per hole.
4. Cut down and paint stump (all year round): triclopyr 600 EC (100ml/L) or triclopyr 120g/L (500ml/L) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/10L) or picloram gel.
5. Spray (spring-summer): triclopyr 600 EC (30ml/10L) or triclopyr 120g/L (15ml/L).

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Roots sucker and reseeds profusely in bared areas, resprouts from cut trunks and high light levels encourage seed germination. Light lover, dislikes growing amongst species of similar height such as pioneer species. Succeeded in tall canopy habitats by taller native species where their seedlings exist so these sites can be left to regenerate (20-40 years). Amongst well established, tall native vegetation, regeneration can be speeded by wattle control. Clear all roads, quarries and other sources. Maintain native groundcover at all times.



www.weedbusters.org.nz



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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