

# Green Cestrum

Green cestrum is a large shrub with shiny leaves, clusters of yellow flowers and shiny, black berries. It is highly poisonous to cattle and can kill both animals and humans.

## WHAT IS GREEN CESTRUM?

Green cestrum is a large, poisonous and highly toxic shrub which is found in the Mid-Western Region. Green cestrum is typically found around water courses, however it can also be found in paddocks where it will compete with other vegetation.

The weed is spread by birds that eat the berries and spread the seed. Green cestrum will continue to grow if stumps are not treated after cutting. The plant will also grow from root sections which remain after a plant has been partly dug or pulled out.

## IMPACTS TO THE REGION

Green cestrum is toxic to animals and humans, and outcompetes other vegetation.

Green cestrum contains a poison called 'carboxyparquin' that causes liver and brain damage. The weed is still poisonous after it has been cut down or sprayed.

### Human poisoning

All parts of the plant, especially the berries, are very toxic if eaten. Eating green cestrum causes liver poisoning and can be fatal. Avoid touching the plant with bare skin.

If the patient is unconscious, unresponsive or having difficulty breathing dial 000. If the patient is conscious and responsive call the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26 or your local doctor. When presenting at a hospital take a piece of the plant for identification.

### Livestock poisoning

Green cestrum can cause 'sudden death' in livestock. Animals that appeared healthy 24 hours before will be found dead for no clear reason. Animals that have consumed Green cestrum may die in a few hours, or be sick for a few days before they die.

Cattle are most affected. Deaths have also occurred in goats, sheep, horses, pigs and poultry. All parts of the plant are poisonous. Even though it is not very palatable animals may eat it when other feed is scarce. Recently sprayed, wilting plants are more palatable than healthy plants and can potentially cause more deaths. Remove stock away from paddocks when controlling Green cestrum. Do not return stock until the leaf material has disintegrated or been removed.

## HOW TO IDENTIFY

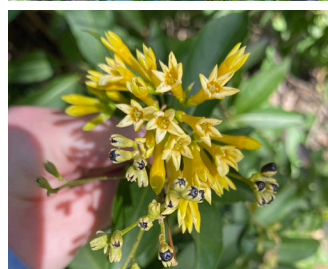
Green cestrum will flower from spring to winter. Flowers are a vibrant yellow and can have a slight green tint. Flowers have a strong, unpleasant scent during the day and will smell sweet in the night. Leaves are shiny-green around 20–30mm wide and 80–100mm long. Leaves have smooth edges and come to a point at the end and also produce a foul smell when crushed. During summer and autumn plants will have a clusters of berries which are dark and egg shaped. Each berry contains small seeds roughly 5mm long. During winter, the berries will remain on the plant but will shrivel up and become grey.



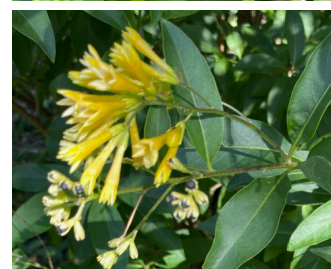
SPRING TO WINTER FLOWERING



LEAVES ARE POINTED AT ENDS



FLOWERS ARE VIBRANT YELLOW



DARK AND EGG SHAPED BERRIES

## CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT

Successful weed control requires follow up after the initial efforts. This means looking for and killing regrowth or new seedlings. Council advises land owners to use a combination of control methods, and protective clothing to tackle Green cestrum.



Treat mature plants in early spring, before they flower



Be aware that control attempts can encourage seed germination



Control regrowth from treated plants



Use mulches and revegetate to suppress seedlings



Look for and kill new seedlings in autumn



Keep checking for new seedlings for many years because seeds can lie dormant

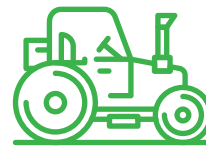
Management methods include:



Early detection of Green cestrum by destroying new infestations before they flower and produce berries.



Out-compete by planting appropriate pasture or native species can suppress seedlings and regrowth.



Physical removal by repeated cutting down, digging or pushing out by mechanical equipment. Remove and destroy all the yellow roots to prevent regrowth.



Chemical control in early spring for mature plants and autumn for new seedlings. herbicides are often the most effective way to control green cestrum. Mature plants are likely to need repeated treatments.

## RESPONSIBILITY

For land owners under the Biosecurity Act 2015, you have a General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) where you are expected to, within reason know about any weeds which may impact your land. Owners should have a plan of management in place to reduce, minimise or eliminate the risk posed by weeds on your property.

When you report Green cestrum, the infected area will be inspected Council along with a management strategy plan. A follow-up inspection will then be arranged. Council is responsible for enforcing the Biosecurity Act 2015 and its regulations. This includes fines for failure to comply with GBD.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit Council's website [midwestern.nsw.gov.au](http://midwestern.nsw.gov.au), or the NSW DPI website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) and search 'weeds'. Council's Weeds Team are available to assist on 6378 2939 or at [weeds.admin@midwestern.nsw.gov.au](mailto:weeds.admin@midwestern.nsw.gov.au).

### DISCLAIMER

The information contained in this fact sheet is general in nature and should not be relied upon as the complete source of information to be considered. This document is not intended as a substitute for consulting relevant legislation or for obtaining appropriate professional advice relevant to your particular circumstances.

References: NSW DPI, Plantnet FloraOnline