

Moth Plant

(Araujia sericifera)

Is Moth Plant on your property?

Mothplant is included in Horizon's Regional Pest Plant Management Strategy as a Containment plant. This means that within a defined control area the pest plant species will be controlled wherever it is found. The focus of control is placed where infestations are low or where the pest plant in question poses a high risk. If you see any sites where it is growing or can help with details of the plant, please contact us on free phone 0508 800 800.



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Identification

Mothplant is a rampant, evergreen vine growing to 10m tall with smelly, milky sap. Stems are twining, flexible, tough, and woody near base. Leaves are dark green, hairless and dull above, grayish-downy below. Flowers bell-shaped, 20-25mm diameter, white, occasionally with pale pink streaks, usually in 2-4 clusters and occur December-May (can trap and kill insects). Distinctive pear-shaped choko-like pod, 10 x 7cm, thick and leathery, containing kapok-like pulp, splits open dispersing many black, thistledown-like seeds.

Weedy characteristics

Rapid growth to canopy, overtops other vines. Forms large, heavy, long-lived masses. Shade-tolerant, even as a seedling (rare amongst vines). Very tolerant to drought or damp, wind, salt, many soil types and damage. Produces masses of viable seeds, spread long distances. Poisonous and irritant-inducing (not grazed). Frost-tender.

Methods of dispersal

Seeds dispersed by wind. Also gardens, roadsides, orchards, hedges, plantations, vacant and industrial land.

Impact on indigenous plants

Smothers and kills plants to medium-high canopy, prevents recruitment. Germinates in light wells or semi-shade inside established forest, often long distance from seed source. May kill native insect species.

Typical habitats

Intact and disturbed forest and margins, tracks, coastline, cliffs, scrublands, mangroves, inshore and offshore islands, almost any frost-free habitat.

Control

1. Pull up seedlings and many other plants. All year round.
2. Stump swab: Tordon BK 10%; or Banvine 20%. Mulch trash. Best in summer Autumn.
3. Spray: Tordon BK at gorse rates; or Banvine at vine rates. Summer-autumn.

Site management

Poisonous and causes dermatitis; protect skin against contact with sap. Destroy ripe pods first to minimise seeding and seed contamination of clothing. Follow up 6-monthly, replant bare spots.

Species recovery

Stumps resprout. Bared areas reseed profusely.

For more information freephone 0508 800 800.

