

Senegal tea

(*Gymnocoronis spilanthoides*)

Is Senegal tea on your property?

Senegal tea is included in the strategy as a Surveillance plant. This means that Horizons will fund a region-wide programme to search for and control new incursions that pose a threat to production and natural areas. If you see any plants growing in the Region, please free phone 0508 800 800.



Identification

Perennial aquatic herb to 1+ m high. Roots fine and fibrous, or aerial from stem nodes. Stems erect at first, becoming prostrate, branching and rooting at nodes, 1-1.5m long, hollow, inflated and floating. Leaves paired with opposite stalks joined at stem, lance-shaped, dark green, serrated, slightly wavy. Flowerhead is clover like, with many thin white florets, Nov-Apr. Seeds are yellow-brown, 5 mm diam. Plant is dormant over winter and dies back to the rootstock if chilled, resprouting in spring.

Weedy characteristics

Roots and reseeds in shallow water and damp ground, forming dense mats. Produces few, long-lived and well dispersed seeds. Matures and grows quickly, overtops and scrambles over other marginal species. Tolerates warm temperatures, partial drying-out of stems and root crowns, most soils and water nutrients levels.

Methods of dispersal

Seeds, stem and root fragments float downstream. Seeds and semi-dry fragments are carried in soil movement and on livestock hooves. Can be dumped from aquaria, fish ponds, and gardens.

Impact on indigenous plants

Excludes all other species in marginal and shallow freshwater habitats, also forms mats over deep water. Prevents recruitment, causes flooding, rotting vegetation ruins water quality.

Typical habitats

Wetlands and swamps, rivers and streams, wet ground; especially in the North Island.

Control

1. Dig out small sites and dispose of plants. All year round.
2. Weed wipe with glyphosate 50% + penetrant. Spring-summer.
3. Spray with Garlon 360 0.6%. Spring-summer.

Site management

Follow up 3-monthly until eliminated. Do not graze, stock will spread fragments.

Species recovery

Stems and rootstock resprout. Bare spots reseed.

For more information freephone 0508 800 800.

