

WEED FILE:

CAPE WEED



Arctotheca calendula

DESCRIPTION

Cape weed is an annual plant with daisy-like yellow flowers, and is sometimes incorrectly referred to as Cape daisy.

The plant forms large spreading rosettes that are particularly unwelcome visual blemishes in lawns, turf and sports grounds.

The leaves are deeply lobed, and are more jagged in appearance than other related dandelion-type flowering flat weeds. The terminal (tip) lobe is larger and more rounded than the rest, and individual leaves reach about 20cm in length. The leaf colour is green/grey on the upper side, and much paler and slightly woolly on the undersides.

Flowers are the most distinctive identification feature. They are up to 4cm in diameter and of the 'daisy' style, with dark purple centres and yellow florets (petals). The florets are bright yellow near the base, but becoming distinctly paler toward the tips. The flowers appear singly on stalks standing to about 10cm high. The Cape weed generally flowers from October to December.

The root system consists of a substantial fleshy taproot.

Cape weed is known to be poisonous, and has poisoned both cattle and sheep in Australia, as well as cattle in New Zealand. As with most poisonous weeds, stock will normally not eat it, though with such large spreading rosettes it will presumably be difficult to avoid entirely.

HABITAT

Cape weed appears in most parts of New Zealand and is spreading. It is most often found at roadsides, waste areas, lawns and turf, recreational grounds, and in pastures (though less frequently). It prefers the light sandy soils of coastal areas but copes well with heavier conditions and is appearing

more frequently in non-coastal situations.

Cape weed establishes readily where turf or pasture has been made sparse by drought. Recreational grounds using drought-resistant cultivars will be able to better resist infestation. Cape weed is most commonly spread by seed, and mowers used on lawns and recreational grounds should be well cleaned immediately after mowing flowering Cape weed, and especially before use on any un-infested areas.

In lawns, Cape weed can be controlled by preventing it from flowering and forming seed, via mowing and by spot spraying (see below).

HERBICIDE CONTROL

Cape weed is controlled by several herbicides, with the choice depending on the situation. Best results follow treatment when the rosette stage is young and growing actively.

Spot Spraying

- **Granny** at 45g/10L water (will damage oversprayed adjacent grass)
- * **Glyphosate 360** at 100ml/10L water (will damage oversprayed adjacent grass)
- **GrassMate** at 60ml/10L water (grass friendly, but damages clover)

Recreational Grounds and Pastures

- **GrassMate** at 2L/Ha in 200-300L water, boom sprayed when the weed is young and active, and preferably before flowering. This treatment will not damage grass species but will damage clover.
- **Cobber** at 1-2L/Ha in 200-300L water. Use the lower rate on seedlings. This treatment will damage clover. Note that Cobber CANNOT be used if the treated area is to be mowed and the clippings used for composting, or disposed of in a green waste-recycling centre.

