

WEED FILE:

TUTSAN



DESCRIPTION

Tutsan isn't Tutu (some people confuse the similar names, but probably not the actual weeds themselves). Tutsan, also known as Sweet Amber, is a small, erect shrub, about 1.5m high. It's a member of the same plant family as St John's Wort.

The Tutsan shrub is a perennial semi-evergreen with light-green, oval, fragrant leaves that turn reddish in the autumn. Leaf size is up to 100mm long and 50mm wide. Stems are woody, and usually reddish in colour.

From November to February the Tutsan produces yellow five-petalled flowers with long stamens, around 25mm in diameter. They grow at the end of the stems in close clusters of 2 to 8 flowers. Flowering is followed by the appearance of round (10mm dia) red berries that ripen to black.

The seeds (inside the berries) are spread by birds, as well as water, wind and soil-borne means. The seeds are numerous, long-lived and tolerant to environmental extremes, and so can survive and regenerate well after a site has been initially cleared.

Tutsan grows most actively around streams, tracks and roadsides, banks, excavated and disturbed areas, and in rough and lightly farmed pastoral land. It forms extensive and dense patches once it gets a start, smothering existing low-growing plants and spreading to invade adjacent productive land. It prefers cool, wet conditions and is reasonably tolerant to shade.

In some regions Tutsan is a 'boundary control plant' and must be controlled within 20 metres of the site's boundary.

Tutsan is only mildly poisonous (probably just the berries), but is unpalatable to all stock because of the bitter taste.

MANUAL & MECHANICAL REMOVAL

Small plants can be successfully removed by hand-pulling. Larger stands of plants can be cleared by slashing, but spraying of regrowth will still be necessary. Removed material can be left on site to rot, but may be collected for burying or composting if preferred.



HERBICIDE CONTROL

Cut & Stump Paint

This works best during spring and summer, when there is sufficient biological activity for the herbicide to get into the rest of the plant via the cut stump.

- **MSF600** at 5g/L

Cut the plant off as low to the ground as possible, and liberally coat the stump with the herbicide mixture immediately after cutting, to ensure optimum herbicide penetration before the cut 'heals'.

Spot Treatment

- **Buckshot** granules applied dry at 55g per square metre sprinkled around the base of the plant and out to the drip line. The plant is then left to die standing. This is an excellent 'target-of-opportunity' treatment when carried on the bike or ute.

Spraying

This is the preferred method of control for larger infestations that are impractical to control by the other methods (above).

Slash larger plants and dense stands, and spray regrowth during spring or summer with:

- **Glyphosate 360** at 1L/100L plus 100ml **SuperWetter** organosilicone penetrant.
- **MSF600** at 35g/100L plus 100ml **SuperWetter** organosilicone penetrant.

Foliar spray large stands without first slashing, during Nov-Jan only, with:

- **Grassmate** at 6ml/L by knapsack (i.e. 90ml in a 15L knapsack)
Add **SuperWetter** penetrant at 15ml/15L.
- **MSF600** at 35g/100L by handgun, plus 100ml **SuperWetter** penetrant.

The preferred herbicide for spraying is **MSF600** as it gives the best control with least regrowth. **Grassmate** is effective, and is grass-friendly, but more expensive. **Glyphosate** is perhaps slightly less effective, but remains a good choice if the other recommended herbicides are not on hand.