



SEPTEMBER 2008

Cestrum parqui GREEN CESTRUM

Green Cestrum is also known as Green Poison Berry or Chilean Cestrum and is incorrectly known as Deadly Nightshade in some areas.

DESCRIPTION

Green Cestrum is a medium sized perennial shrub growing to 2 to 3 metres high. Its shiny green leaves are 20 to 30 mm wide and 80 to 100 mm long. They have smooth edges, are pointed at each end and are arranged alternatively along the branch. The leaves have a foul smell when crushed. The flowers are greenish yellow and common throughout most of the year but main flowering is from late spring to autumn. The flowers occur in clusters at the end of branches and individual flowers are 20 to 25 mm long, and are trumpet in shape, opening into 5, 6 or 7 small triangular lobes. Clusters of shiny black egg-shaped berries 7 to 10 mm long are produced during summer and autumn.

HABITAT

Green Cestrum was previously found in large numbers around horse stables and it has been a common garden plant. Cestrum is now most commonly found in moist drainage lines and bushland edges.

EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Green Cestrum is found in urban bushland growing in small to medium size thickets, with larger infestations on alluvial soils along streams. These infestations are usually dominant and will exclude all other plants including natives. The plant is known to be toxic to livestock and humans. Death from eating small quantities of leaves, twigs or fruit is usually rapid and painful.



Leaves and flowers of Green Cestrum.
Source: Sutherland Shire Council

ORIGIN AND DISTRIBUTION

Cestrum was originally introduced from South America for use as a flowering shrub in gardens and often used as a hedge. It spreads most commonly in droppings from birds that have eaten the berries. Seeds are also readily spread along watercourses during floods. Green Cestrum colonies increase in size and density by suckering and seedling growth within and along the edges of thickets.

DECLARATION

Green Cestrum has been gazetted as a noxious weed in certain areas of the state, including Sutherland Shire. The Noxious Weeds Act 1993 is an instrument serving the protection of our environment, general health of the community and agricultural production. Under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993 all noxious weeds must be controlled. The act applies to all landowners and occupiers. This weed has a control category of class 3. For class 3 noxious weeds: *“the plant must be fully and continuously suppressed and destroyed”*. Failure to comply with the prescribed categories may result in a fine of 100 penalty units.

CONTROL

Either dig out the plant including the root ball or Scrape and Paint with Glyphosate 360g/L. Suckering may occur and a follow-up program will need to be undertaken until total eradication is achieved. For information on the most effective herbicide please contact council staff. Any herbicide use should be in accordance with the label recommendations and all safety directions as indicated on the label should be followed.



Cestrum forms dense impenetrable stands.
Source: Sutherland Shire Council

For further information contact
Bushcare or Greenweb Units
on 02 9710 0333
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COUNCIL 