

PLANT PEST CONTROL

LAND PLANT PESTS

Bathurst Bur: *Xanthium spinosum*

Why are we worried?

Bathurst Bur is a compact annual herb growing up to a metre tall. It produces hard burs with many hooked spines, and these are extremely difficult to remove from wool. Affected wool has a significantly reduced value due to increased scouring costs.

Seedlings can be toxic when they are very small. Pigs are affected more than sheep or cattle. In cultivated land, infestations can swamp out crops. The spiky leaves and burs restrict both animal movement and recreational walking.

What does it look like?

- Bathurst Bur is compact and may become woody or bushy, ranging in height from 30cm to a metre. Stems have groups of three-pronged, stiff, yellow spines at the base of each leaf or branch.
- The leaves are dark grey

to green, with prominent white veins and are almost silver underneath due to a cover of fine hairs.

- Flowers develop into brown burs, 10 to 12mm long, covered with hooked spines.

The burs contain two seeds, one which germinates the first year, and the second the next year.

Where is it found?

Bathurst Bur can be found anywhere in Hawke's Bay, but is particularly common in cultivated areas, along rivers and in any disturbed sites.



What is the best way to control the plant?

Bathurst Bur is often spread by machinery. In infested areas to minimise the chance of spread, machinery needs to be washed down before moving to the next paddock.

Isolated plants can be hand-pulled or grubbed out. Large areas can be mown. If this is done after flowering, plants will generally die. Chemical control is best in late spring when the plants are young. When the plant matures and becomes woody, chemical uptake is more difficult.

Common chemicals for control of seedlings are 2-4,D and MCPA. For mature plants use Tordon 50D or Versatill. It is best to seek advice from your Noxious Plants Officer or chemical representative before spraying.

For further information

If you think you may have this plant pest on your property, please contact the Biosecurity Plants Officers at Hawke's Bay Regional Council for advice and we will work with you to eradicate it.

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