

WEED INFORMATION SHEET

WILD TOBACCO TREE

Solanum mauritianum- Wild Tobacco Tree (also known as Tobacco Nightshade, Tobacco Bush, Woolly Nightshade, Kerosene Plant and Flannel Plant.)

Origin – Argentina, South America.

Description – A perennial shrub or small tree up to 4m high. Leaves often drooping and are oval up to 30cm long and up to 15cm wide, grey-green densely covered with velvety hairs, violet (or rare white) 5 petal flowers are usually numerous and in flat-topped clusters. Individual flowers 1.5cm to 2.5cm in diameter. Fruit (berries) are dull yellow 1cm -1.5cm and are hairy when young. Spring flowering.

Leaves and berries are poisonous, and all parts may cause skin irritation or dermatitis- skin may become red and itchy and covered with blisters. Occasionally been the cause of poisoning in cattle and pigs, symptoms if digested include: Nausea, dizziness, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea, fever and rapid pulse, swollen eyes, pupils dilated, weakness and drowsiness.



Mainly a coloniser of disturbed sites. Able to germinate on small patches of disturbed soil. Stimulated by fire often forming thickets of hundreds of seedlings per sq m. Growth is particularly rapid in the first year, with maturity achieved within one growing season. Able to re-sprout prolifically from the base, trunk and larger branches. Adaptable to most soil types in a sunny position.

