

WEED INFORMATION SHEET

CROFTON WEED



Crofton Weed – *Ageratina adenophora*, is a native of Mexico and is now present as a weed in India, Sri Lanka, the Canary Islands, Jamaica, mainland USA, Hawaii, Fiji, New Zealand and Australia.

Since its escape from ornamental cultivation in Australia in about 1900 it has become widespread in Queensland coastal areas, on the north coast of New South Wales and extends south to Wollongong. It is a weed in many local government areas of coastal New South Wales from Gosford to the Queensland border.

DESCRIPTION – Crofton Weed is an erect perennial shrub with numerous chocolate-brown coloured woody stems emanating from an underground crown, reaching a height of 1 to 2 metres. It has broad, slightly crinkled, trowel-shaped, toothed leaves with chocolate coloured petioles. It produces white flowers in spring, which form small dense clusters at the end of branches.

WHY IS IT A WEED –

Crofton Weed is poisonous to horses leading to death. It is possible that Crofton weed is at its most poisonous during or soon after flowering.

It spreads rapidly. Mature plants can produce between 10 000 to 100 000 seeds per year. Seeds are very light and are windborne over long distances, and invade previously uninfected areas. The seeds require light to stimulate germination so invasion commonly takes place on bare disturbed sites, and rarely on heavily vegetated sites.

It is an aggressive invader, degrading natural environments and ecosystems.

*Photo's courtesy of K. Bunn, Coastcare
NSW & M. Edmonds*

