

Weed Alert

Dittrichia graveolens

Stinkwort, camphor inula, stinkweed



Caution: The oils from this plant may cause headaches, blistering and itchiness. Wear long protective gloves and protect your face when handling.

© 2004 Robert E. Preston, Ph.D.
(Upper left and right photo)
© 2005 DPI
(Bottom left photo)

Identification

Dittrichia is a member of the Asteraceae or Sunflower Family and closely resembles members of the tarweed group. It has many branches with alternate leaves covered with fine hairs. Resembling a small Christmas tree, it grows up to 3 feet tall, with light grayish-green, sticky, foliage. It has yellow flowers, small, fluffy, light brown seed heads, and a strong smell of camphor.

Problem

Dittrichia graveolens has spread rapidly throughout Santa Clara County. It tends to grow on vacant, disturbed areas where there is little vegetative competition, such as parking lots, roadway edges, trail heads and trail edges forming dense monocultures. A medium size plant produces 600-700 flowers, each flower producing 50 viable seeds. Seeds are viable up to three years. It secretes a sticky exudate that causes the seed to cling to clothing, shoe, tires, and equipment. It is able to invade serpentine and alkaline soils.

Target Areas

It may not be possible to treat all *Dittrichia* sites under your jurisdiction, however targeting areas where vehicles and maintenance equipment are stored or at trailheads will keep this invasive weed from spreading further into our wildlands or uninfected areas of Santa Clara County.

Control Methods

Plant first emerges in mid-summer; flowers appear September through November. If flowering heads are present, they should be contained.

D. graveolens tends to colonize open areas that have been cleared or mowed. In order to prevent reestablishment, it is important to seed desirable plants following the removal of *D. graveolens*. Monitor and repeat up to three years. Due to the sticky exudates, it is important to clean equipment, shoes, etc. after associating with this plant in order to prevent further spreading, especially onto other sites. Any treatment method should be applied twice, in early summer and late summer.

Roundup Pro®, Milestone® and Transline® are effective against *Dittrichia*. Apply at labeled rates when plants are small or up until they flower, between June and August.