

Cape weed

Arctotheca calendula

Family Asteraceae



Identification

- Annual (but may live longer in New Zealand conditions) up to 30 cm tall
- Leaves deeply lobed, toothed with white woolly hairs on the under-surface
- Low growing, forming a rosette shape with sprawling stems
- Yellow flowers (October - December) with a dark centre are held on long stalks
- Stout taproot
- Can be toxic to livestock



Cape weed flowers (3 - 4 cm in diameter). Photo: K. McCombs



Cape weed leaves showing the white woolly undersurface. Photo: K. McCombs

Similar species

Cape weed looks like a common garden plant and should not be mistaken for native species. It does though appear very similar to other common garden plants such as *Arctotis stoechadifolia* and *Gazania* species.

Control

Remove the entire plant and dispose of material appropriately. Take special care with the flowerheads and seeds as this plant spreads by seed. Mow when flowering and ensure the mower is clean and free of seed before being used again.

An appropriate herbicide can also be used. Use all herbicides in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and ensure no herbicide comes into contact with other plants, the soils and waterways.

Why is it a problem?

Cape weed is known to smother other plants growing near it. Cape weed produces large amounts of seed and when it dies off in summer, it leaves an exposed area for its own seedlings to establish. It is mainly a problem in grassland areas.

Where is it found?

Tolerant of salt and poor soils, cape weed can often be found in coastal areas, especially dunes. It can also be found along street verges, lawns, playing fields, waste areas and sometimes in pasture. Cape weed is common in Canterbury.



Cape weed. Photo: C. Howell