

Senegal tea

Gymnocoronis spilanthoides

Family Asteraceae



Identification

- A semi-aquatic perennial weed.
- Can grow to more than 1 m tall.
- The dark-green, lance-shaped leaves have serrated edges and a slightly waxy surface.
- 'Clover-like' flowers appear from November to April.
- The larger stems are hollow.
- Young stems are often angled with ridges down the length of the stem. Mature stems are more rounded.



Senegal tea 'clover-like' flower. Photo: C. Macann (ECan).



Senegal tea hollow stem. Photo: Rod Smart.

Status

Senegal tea is an unwanted organism declared under the Biosecurity Act 1993, which makes it illegal to knowingly release, spread, display or sell, breed, propagate or otherwise distribute plants or parts of plants.

Have you seen it?

If you think you have found Senegal tea, please contact either the Potential Pest Line on (03) 363 9380 immediately or email weeds@ecan.govt.nz.

Where is it found?

Senegal tea will grow in damp/marshy soils near water and water margins in still/slow-moving waterways. It has recently been found alongside the lower Waimakariri River in Canterbury.

Why is it a problem?

Senegal tea is a fast-growing species that forms floating mats that cover waterways, potentially displacing native vegetation. Large infestations can also block drainage systems resulting in flooding as well as impeding irrigation and recreational activities. Senegal tea is spread by seed and fragments breaking off giving rise to new plants.



Flowering Senegal tea near the Waimakariri River. Photo: Rob McCaw.