

FACT SHEET

Weeds & Pest Plants of Norfolk Island

William Taylor

Ageratina ripara

Common Names

Mistflower, Creeping Crofton Weed, River Eupatorium, Spreading Mistflower, Spreading Snakeroot, Small Crofton Weed

Family

Asteraceae

Origin

Central and South America

Description:

A short, sprawling perennial herb that creates dense coverage over large areas of land. William Taylor is usually 40-60cm tall, however is capable of reaching up to 1m in height.

It has a short, thick root stock that is very brittle and snaps easily when hand pulling.

Flowers:

Flowers don't display 'petals' as such but emerge as clusters of fluffy white flowers on the end of long branches. Flowers emerge from August to October. Flower clusters develop into seedheads.

Leaves:

The leaves are dark green and arranged on opposite sides of the stem. They are 3 to 13cm long and 1 to 4cm wide. Leaves are toothed along the edges and tapered at each end. Petiole and young stems are reddish-purple, cylindrical and smooth. Stems turn brown and woody as they mature.

How does it spread?

Seeds spread easily by wind, watercourses, or in muddy tyres/boots. Also spread by sprawling stems that root at the nodes in contact with soil.



Photo credit: Weeds Australia



Photo credit: Lilli-unna King

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Why is it an issue?

William Taylor can form very dense thickets across the ground. It can easily out-compete native vegetation and displace pasture, and can also be toxic to horses if left to graze for extended periods of time.

Where is it likely to occur?

Island-wide, environments include but are not limited to: paddocks, roadsides, fence lines, open forests, cleared areas, native vegetation and disturbed ground.

How can I control it?

- Hand weeding - can be easily pulled by hand for small areas. Ensure the root stock is displaced also and not just snapped off at ground level.
- Slashing - good control for large areas, however follow up with herbicide is necessary for proper treatment.
- Herbicide - herbicides containing glyphosate, triclopyr, or imazapyr are effective. Always follow label instructions meticulously.



Photo credit: Lilli-unna King