

Downy hakea

Hakea gibbosa

Family

Proteaceae (protea)

Also known as

Hakea pubescens

Where is it originally from?

Australia

What does it look like?

Prickly, woody, spreading, evergreen shrub (<3m tall) with hairy stems, and stiff, hairy, needle-like leaves (30-80 x 1 mm) with sharp pointed ends. Small sparse clusters of white flowers (winter-summer) develop into round, woody seed capsules (20-30 x 14-25 mm) with wrinkled surfaces, which contain winged black seeds (30-33 x 10-14 mm).

Are there any similar species?

Hakea sericea (qv) is usually taller, leaves hairy only when young.

Why is it weedy?

Tolerant of fire, damage (not grazed), damp to severe drought, moderate shade, poor soils, and high to cool temperature. Many long-lived seeds and moderately long-lived plants, and forms dense stands, dominating other species in poor soils. May decrease recreational use of an area because of spiny habit.

How does it spread?

Seed is spread by water and soil movement, livestock, and dumped vegetation as well as wind, and fire encourages seed germination.

What damage does it do?

Dominates low shrubland in very low fertility, poor soil habitats. Keeps sites dry, adds to fire risk, causes succession to pampas and grasses. Contributes to local extinction of rare native fern, orchid and shrub species.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Gumlands, shrubland, short tussockland, bare land, fernland, especially burnt sites. Roadsides, open hillsides, shrublands. Prefers open, sunny positions.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Leave for natural succession (8-20 years): can be accelerated by felling plants in sites of dense native vegetation, allowing native species to overtop Hakea. Best in winter to maximise regeneration and minimise fire risk.
2. Pull out small plants (all year round): mulch.
3. Cut & fill (autumn): make 1 cut every 100mm around the trunk and fill each cut with 2g metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg.
4. Cut trunk and paint stump (autumn-winter): cut trunk near to the ground, and swab freshly cut stump with metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/L).
5. Overall spray (autumn): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/10L + penetrant). Best for small plants.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Avoid fire at all times, implement fire protection strategy. Most sites can be left to regenerate to native species provided fire can be permanently avoided.



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Photo: Trevor James



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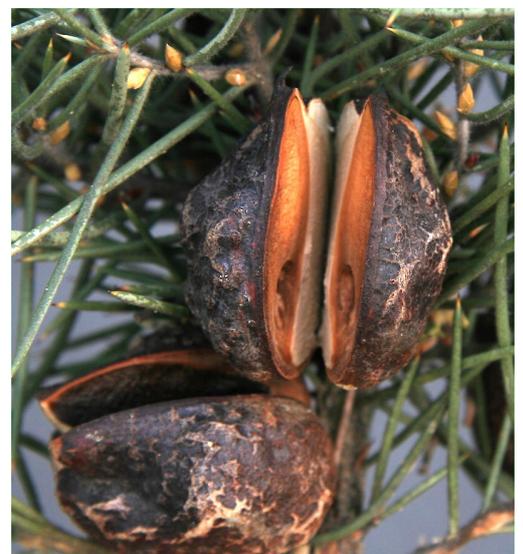


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