

# Currant bush

*Carissa ovata* and *Carissa lanceolata*



Currant bush reduces pasture production, which can be particularly serious when it covers an extensive area. It is drought tolerant and not grazed as much as the pasture species.

This gives it an advantage in dry times or in overgrazed situations.

In some areas, currant bush is seen as a useful browse plant. It is palatable to stock and has a moderate nutritional value. It provides drought fodder and reduces soil erosion. The small thickets also offer good habitat for wild animals and birds.

## Legal requirements

Currant bush is not a prohibited or restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. However, by law, everyone has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take reasonable and practical measures to minimise the biosecurity risks associated with invasive plants under their control.

Local governments must have a biosecurity plan that covers invasive plants in their area. This plan may include actions to be taken on currant bush. Some of these actions may be required under local laws. Contact your local government for more information.



**Queensland**  
Government

## Description

Currant bush is a sprawling native shrub with thorny stems. Currant bush grows up to 3 m high but is usually 1–2 m, branching out to several metres in diameter, and often forms dense, low thickets.

The leaves are leathery, grow opposite one another on the stem, are 2–4 cm long and are either narrow (*Carissa lanceolata*) or oval-shaped (*Carissa ovata*).

The flowers are small and white, tube-shaped with pointed lobes at the end, and highly scented. The flowers develop into oval-shaped berries, 5–9 mm long, which become soft and black when mature and contain 1–2 seeds.

## Habitat and distribution

Currant bush is widespread throughout sub-coastal and semi-arid Queensland. It prefers well-drained soils and in normal conditions, does not spread quickly. However, when ground cover is significantly reduced, such as from drought, heavy grazing pressure or clearing, currant bush will rapidly invade.

## Control

### Mechanical control

Mechanical control of currant bush is best achieved by cutter bars, blade ploughs, or combined pulling, seeding, and follow-up burning. However, these methods are expensive.

Bulldozing seems to encourage currant bush growth. It fails to kill the roots, and by clearing the ground cover, it creates conditions that favour the spread of the plant.

### Herbicide control

Herbicide control may be used alone or as a follow-up to mechanical control (see Table 1).

### More information

More information is available from your local government or visit [biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au).

**Table 1. Herbicides for the control of currant bush**

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Comments
Brigalow regrowth and associated problem woody weeds on grazing land	Tebuthion 200 g/kg (e.g. Clearview 200 GR)	Hand application only: 1.5 g/m <sup>2</sup>	Will kill native trees Do not use near waterways Read label for instructions
	Tebuthion 200 g/kg (e.g. Clearview)	Aerial application: 7.5–15 kg/ha	7.5 kg for lighter duplex soils 10 kg for medium density re-growth on light clay soils 12.5 kg and above for heavy density re-growth on heavy acidic clays  Aerial application to be undertaken in accordance with Graslan Aerial Herbicide Code of Practice 2006

### Notes:

Recording of herbicide usage is required on grazing properties over 2000 ha in Great Barrier Reef catchments. Use on native vegetation must be done in accordance with the *Vegetation Management Act 2000* in Queensland.

**Read the label carefully before use. Always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.**

