



Description

Willow weed is a summer annual that germinates in spring and dies off in late autumn with the first frosts. In open areas it sprawls laterally across the ground; in crops and established pasture it grows more upright, reaching around 40 cm. The leaves are sword-shaped, up to 15 cm long, dark green, and usually carry a distinctive dark brown or black spot in the centre of the upper surface. At the base of each leaf is a papery sheath with a distinct fringe of hairs – a key identification feature. Flowers are small, pink, and clustered into tight cylindrical spikes up to 4 cm long at the ends of stems from mid-summer. It spreads from both seed – which can remain viable in the soil for many years – and from stem fragments, meaning incomplete removal spreads the problem.

Habitat

- Cultivated land throughout New Zealand – pastures, crops, market gardens, lifestyle blocks.
- Prefers moist, well-aerated soils. Most aggressive where summers are not too dry.
- Germinates in spring; most competitive against young crops and newly sown pastures.
- Also found in drain banks, damp paddock margins, and disturbed ground.

Manual Removal

Manual removal is only practical for isolated plants or as follow-up after spraying. Willow weed regrows readily from stem fragments – every piece left behind can produce a new plant. Collect and remove all plant material from site and dispose of it off-site. Seeds in the soil survive winter frosts and fresh seedlings will appear each spring. Complete eradication is likely to take several seasons.



LIVESTOCK RISK

Stock rarely graze willow weed under normal conditions, but it is suspected of causing illness and death in livestock in both New Zealand and overseas. After spraying, willow weed may become more palatable – keep stock out of treated areas until plants have fully died down.

Herbicide Control

OUR SPECIALITY

Control is most reliable up to the 4-leaf seedling stage. Spray while the weed is actively growing in good conditions.

BOOM SPRAYING

No damage to pasture grasses. Minimise clover impact by spraying when clover is dormant or after hard grazing. Apply no more than once per season. In crops, check label for crop growth stage restrictions.

Dicamba 500 Select 100 ml + **Rainbow & Brown MCPA750** 260 ml per 100 L water per hectare. Will suppress clover temporarily.

Dicamba 500 Select 120–140 ml + **WHACK-2,4-D 800** 491 g per 100 L water per hectare. Will suppress clover temporarily.

PastureMate 4 L/ha in 200 L water. Clover-friendly alternative for pasture. Slow-acting – allow several weeks for full effect.

In crops, **Dicamba 500 Select** rates vary by crop type. Refer to the **Dicamba 500 Select** product leaflet for exact crop rates.

SPOT TREATMENT

WHACK-2,4-D 800 2–3 kg/ha for seedlings.

- 50 g per 10 L water for seedlings.
- **G-360 GLYPHOSATE** / **G-540 GLYPHOSATE** / **Granny**

Herbicide Effective spot spray but damages surrounding vegetation. Best used when spraying out a pasture entirely or in non-cropland situations. Apply at label rates.

NON-CROPLAND

TerbGuard 500 15–19 L/ha in 150–300 L water.

Add **G-360 GLYPHOSATE**, **G-540 GLYPHOSATE**, or **Granny Herbicide** at label rates to broaden the weed spectrum. Note: **TerbGuard 500** is NOT registered for use on pasture or cropland – this restriction applies to **TerbGuard 500** only. **G-360 GLYPHOSATE**, **G-540 GLYPHOSATE**, and **Granny Herbicide** are each suitable for pasture and cropland use on their own; it is the **TerbGuard 500** that limits this mix to non-cropland areas.

CUT STEM / PASTE TREATMENT

Cut'n'Paste Glimax Professional,
Cut'n'Paste Bamboo Buster, or
Cut'n'Paste Original Paste the underside of a few of the top leaves.

