

Firethorn

Pyracantha spp.



A native of Asia, firethorn is part of the Malvaceae family (often included in Rosaceae).

Firethorn can form dense thickets and produces many bird-dispersed, moderately long-lived seeds.

Firethorn is commonly planted as ornamentals. There are at least five naturalised *Pyracantha* species in Australia. The most widespread is orange firethorn (*Pyracantha angustifolia*).

Legal requirements

Firethorn 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.



Queensland
Government

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

Description

Firethorn is an evergreen shrub that grows up to 6 m high with alternate lanceolate to ovate leaves up to 5 cm long and 8 mm wide. Flowers appear in spring and summer.

A distinguishing feature of firethorn are the spines on the branches. Flowers are white with five petals and numerous stamens, 8–12 mm, that occur in clusters of 30 flowers along short stems. Stems are spiny, densely hairy and white, turning to red-brown when mature.

Fruit is round, red, orange or yellow and occur along the stems where the flowers were. Berries look like tiny apples, 5–9 mm, and contain seeds. The seeds are brown and irregular in shape and about 2.5 mm. Seeds can be spread by birds or occasionally by water.

Habitat and distribution

Infestations of firethorn occur in southern Queensland on the Granite Belt between Warwick and the border, around the Goomburra Valley near Allora, south of Inglewood on the Dumaresq River and around the fringes of Toowoomba city.



Other locally commonly cultivated species are Nepal firethorn (*Pyracantha crenulata*, *P. rogersiana* and *P. fortuneana*). The other naturalised species is *P. koidzumii*. Firethorns are mostly naturalised around habitation, particularly in urban woodlands and forests.

Herbicide control

There are no herbicide products specifically registered for the control of firethorn in Queensland. However, a permit allows people generally to use some herbicide products to control firethorn as an invasive plant in various situations.

See Table 1 for the treatment options in situations allowed by the permit.

Prior to using the herbicides listed under this permit (PER11463) you must read or have read to you and understand the conditions of the permit. To obtain a copy of this permit visit apvma.gov.au.

More information

More information is available from your local government or visit biosecurity.qld.gov.au.



Table 1. Herbicides for control of firethorn

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Registration details	Comments
Non-agricultural areas, domestic and public service areas, commercial and industrial areas, bushland/ native forests, roadsides, rights-of-way, vacant lots, wastelands, wetlands, dunal and coastal areas	Glyphosate 360 g/L (e.g. Round-up, Weedmaster Duo) or other formulations	500 mL per 1 L water Consult label for correct rate for other products or calculate using instructions on the permit	APVMA permit PER11463 (permit expires 30/04/2027)	Drill, frill, axe or stem injection These application methods require that the herbicide reaches the sapwood within 10–15 seconds of the cut or drill hole being made
	Glyphosate 360 g/L (e.g. Round-up, Weedmaster Duo)	Undiluted to 1 L per 12 L water Consult label for correct rate for other products or calculate using instructions on the permit		Cut stump Paint stump immediately after cutting
	Fluroxypyr 200 g/L e.g. Fluroxypyr 200 Fluroxypyr 333 g/L (e.g. Starane Advanced)	35 mL per 1 L diesel, Biosafe or kerosene		Basal bark spray
		21 mL per 1 L diesel diesel, Biosafe or kerosene		
	Triclopyr 240 g/L + picloram 120 g/L (e.g. Access)	17 mL per 1 L diesel		Basal bark spray or cut stump Paint stump immediately after cutting
	Triclopyr 300 g/L + picloram 100 g/L (e.g. Conqueror) or Triclopyr 300 g/L + picloram 100 g/L + aminopyralid 8 g/L (Grazon Extra)	3.5 mL to 5 mL per 1 L water plus wetting agent or spray oil		Spot spraying where residual weed control is required
	Triclopyr 600 g/L (e.g. Garlon 600)	17 mL per 1 L diesel		Basal bark spray
	Metsulfuron-methyl 600 g/kg (e.g. Associate, Ken-Met 600 WG etc)	10 g per 100 L water plus wetting agent or 100 g per ha plus wetting agent or label rate for specific plant		Spot spray
	Metsulfuron-methyl 600 g/kg (e.g. Kenso AgCare, Ken-Met 600 WG)	2 g per 1 L water at 1 mL per 2 cm of hole or cut		Drill, frill, axe or stem injection
Triclopyr 50 g/L (e.g. Amgrow Chemspray Weed Control Tree and Blackberry Killer)	40 mL per 1 L water	Foliar spray		

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

