

Mimosa diplotricha

Recognize the problem

Family: Fabaceae (pea family)

Common names: Giant sensitive plant, creeping sensitive plant, nila grass, tropical blackberry.

Vietnamese: Trinh nữ móc.

Annual, biennial or evergreen, scrambling, climbing, strongly branched shrub, forming dense thickets 2–3 (–6) m tall; woody at the base with age; stems green or purplish tinged, 4–5-angled in cross-section, covered with sharp, recurved, yellowish spines (3–6 mm long).

Leaves: Bright-green, alternate along branches; twice-divided (10–20 cm long), 4–9 pairs of leaflet branchlets each with 12–30 pairs of small elongated leaflets (6–12 mm long, 1.5 mm wide); leaves fold together at night or when touched.

Flowers: Pinkish-violet or purplish, round heads (12 mm across); borne singly or in small groups on hairy stalks (3.5–16 mm long).

Fruits: Pods; green turning brown as they mature; flat, softly spiny on edges, elongated (8–35 mm long, 3–10 mm wide); occur in clusters which break into one-seeded joints; seeds are light brown (1.9 mm long, 2.7 mm wide).

Background

Origin: Latin America.

Introduction: For erosion control, nitrogen fixation, hedge and barrier, as a source of honey and as ornament.

Habitat: Wet tropics and subtropics; prefers high soil fertility.

Spread: By seeds transported by running water, vehicles, machinery, livestock, humans, as seed contaminant and contaminated earth.

Invades: Crops, plantations, pasture, disturbed areas, wastelands, urban open space, drainage ditches, forest edges/gaps, savannah, wetlands and roadsides.

Impacts: *Mimosa diplotricha* prefers dry land, crop field and roadsides. If *M. diplotricha* reaches high density, cassava root yield can be reduced by 80%. The species can also have a direct negative impact on growth, yield and harvesting of sugarcane, but no direct assessment of the actual economic losses has been made. It readily invades orchards and rice paddies reducing yields and increasing management costs. It is toxic to livestock. Dense stands prevent or inhibit the movement of livestock and wildlife. The weed smothers other plants, shades out light-demanding species and prevents their natural regeneration. Thickets can impede human activity due to the recurved spines on the stems. In Vietnam, the weed seriously affects national parks.

Scientific name(s) > *Mimosa diplotricha*

Leaves are 10-20cm long, divided and fold together at night or when touched. (Photo by © Arne Witt, CABI)



Flowers are pinkish-violet or purplish. (Photo by © Nguyen Van Liem)



The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: All Countries



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