



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

<https://apps.lucidcentral.org/ppp/>

Sicklepods (465)

Relates to: **Weeds**



Photo 1. Extensive ground cover of sicklepod, *Senna tora*.



Photo 2. Close-up of Photo 1, sicklepod, *Senna tora*.



Photo 3. Individual plant, sicklepod, *Senna tora*, showing structure of the leaves.



Photo 4. Close-up of single leaf, sicklepod, *Senna tora*, showing the shape of the leaflets, and the gland on the stem between them.



Photo 5. Flowers and fruits, sicklepod, *Senna obtusifolia*.



Photo 6. Close-up of a flower, sicklepod, *Senna obtusifolia*.



Photo 7. Long thin fruits, sicklepod, *Senna obtusifolia*.

Summary

- Widespread. Asia, Africa, North, South and Central America, Caribbean, Europe, Oceania. In many

Pacific islands.

- Invasive, continuous expanses in disturbed sites, waste areas, roadsides, waterways, pastures, agricultural crops (cotton, peanut, soybean, sugarcane), including plantations (coconut, sugarcane). Sicklepods thrive in many soil types. Alternative hosts of *Tobacco mosaic virus* and *Colletotrichum capsici*, anthracnose of Solanaceous crops.
- Relatively small, 50-150 cm, multiple-branching, erect shrubs, with strong tap roots. Leaves, alternate along the stems, with 2-4 pairs, oval, opposite leaflets, with elongated rod-like gland between the last pair. Flowers, on short stalks, mostly near tips of branches, with five yellow petals. Fruits, sickle shaped, brown when mature, curving downwards. Seeds, shiny, flattened, many per plant, lasting up to 20 years
- Spread: seed, by animals (pass through the gut), water; mud on animals, footwear, vehicles; contaminant of fodder and pasture seeds.
- Biosecurity: high risk of introduction; contaminant of pasture seed. Among 10 worst weeds in American Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu. In Australia, 'restricted invasive plants': *do not release into environment, give away or sell*.
- Biocontrol: *Alternaria cassiae* used as a mycoherbicide in USA.
- Cultural control: hand weeding; slashing; cultivation; mulch; control movement of cattle to prevent spread; vehicle hygiene.
- Chemical control: in Australia: 2,4-D; 2,4-D + picloram; dichlorprop-p; triclopyr + picloram; dicamba. Treat seedlings and new growth. In Fiji, glyphosate.

Common Name

Sicklepod. There have been many common names given to these two species, and this has caused some confusion. However, commonly *Senna tora* is called foetid cassia, or sickle senna, whereas *Senna obtusifolia* is called sicklepod, or Chinese senna. CABI prefers sicklepod for them both!

Scientific Name

Senna tora and *Senna obtusifolia*. They were known previously as *Cassia* species. The two species are closely related, regarded by some as the same; however, others separate them by slight differences in shape and size, and the fact that seed between the two is mostly infertile. They are members of the Fabaceae.

AUTHORS Grahame Jackson & Aradhana Deesh

Adapted from Java bean (*Senna tora*) and Sicklepod (*Senna obtusifolia*) (2018) Weeds of SE Qld and Northern NSW. Lucidcentral. (<https://www.lucidcentral.org/editors-pick-animal-and-plant-identification-keys/key-to-weeds-of-se-qld-and-northern-nsw>); and additional information from CABI (2019) *Senna obtusifolia* (sicklepod). Invasive Species Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/49593#toenvironment>); and Sicklepods (2016) Biosecurity Queensland. Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Queensland Government. (https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/51052/TPA-Sicklepod-PP18.pdf); and Waterhouse DF, Norris KR (1987) *Biological Control Pacific Prospects*. Inkata Press, Melbourne; and *Senna tora* (2020) Wikipedia. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senna_tora); and from *Senna obtusifolia* (2019) Wikipedia. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senna_obtusifolia). Photos 1&2 Joseph LaForest, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org. Photo 3 Nikitakamka Cassia_Tora_(young_plant). Photo 4 Dr. S. Sundarapandian Cassia_tora. Photo 5 Nikitakamka Cassia_Tora_(the_seeds). Photo 6 Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org. Photo 7 Rebekah D. Wallace, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org

Produced with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research under project HORT/2016/185: *Responding to emerging pest and disease threats to horticulture in the Pacific islands*, implemented by the University of Queensland, in association with the Pacific Community and Koronivia Research Station, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji.

This mini fact sheet is a part of the app *Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds*

The mobile application is available from the Google Play Store and Apple iTunes.

