

Fireweed (501)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. In Australia, but NOT in Pacific island countries.
- Aggressive weed especially in pastures (poor nutrition, overgrazed or following drought), cultivated land, open woodlands, grasslands, parks, wastelands, roadsides. Massive early (6-10 weeks) seed production. Environmental weed in competition with native species. Economic impacts from poisoning cattle (acute and chronic): lower carrying capacity, weed management, changing from dairy and beef to sheep/goats. Horses susceptible.
- Spread: stems root from nodes, seed on the wind, birds, animals (including stock), on clothing, and contaminant (hay, other seeds, machinery, vehicles).
- Biosecurity: check pasture seed.
- Biocontrol: none.
- Cultural control: hand-weeding, slashing; maintain vigorous healthy pastures, do not overgraze; use sheep/goats; clean machinery/vehicles; use only weed-free hay, and monitor.
- Chemical control: in Australia, 2,4-D; metsulfuron-methyl; bromoxynil; bromoxynil + aminopyralid; bromoxynil + diflufenican; fluroxypyr + aminopyralid; picloram + triclopyr + aminopyralid.



Photo 1. Stand of fireweed, *Senecio madagascariensis* (Hawaii).



Photo 2. Leaves, fireweed, *Senecio madagascariensis*.

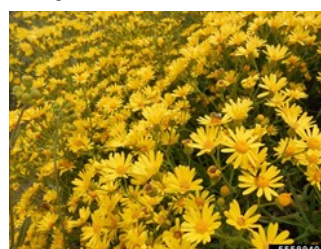


Photo 3. Mass of fireweed, *Senecio madagascariensis*, in flower.



Photo 4. Close-up, fireweed, *Senecio madagascariensis*.



Photo 5. Leaves, flowers and seedheads (lower right), fireweed, *Senecio madagascariensis*. Note, the numerous green bracts on flowers that have lost their 'petals' (especially group at centre).

Common Name

Fireweed. It is also known as Madagascar fireweed, Madagascar ragwort.

Scientific Name

Senecio madagascariensis. It is a member of the Asteraceae.

AUTHOR Grahame Jackson

Information from PIER (2017) *Senecio madagascariensis* Poir., Asteraceae. Pacific Island Ecosystems at Risk (PIER), Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry. (http://www.hear.org/pier/species/senecio_madagascariensis.htm); and CABI (2019) *Senecio madagascariensis* (fireweed). Invasive Species Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/isc/datasheet/49565>); and Fireweed (*Senecio madagascariensis*) (2019) NSW WeedWise. Department of Primary Industries, NSW Government. (<https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Details/53>); and DAF (2020) Fireweed *Senecio madagascariensis*. Queensland Government. (https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/67167/fireweed.pdf); and from *Senecio madagascariensis* (2016) Weeds of Australia, Biosecurity Queensland Edition. Queensland Government. (https://keyserver.lucidcentral.org/weeds/data/media/Html/senecio_madagascariensis.htm). Photo 1 Forrest & Kim Starr, Starr Environmental, bugwood.org. Photo 2 John Tann Fireweed Groundsel leaves: ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fireweed_Groundsel_leaves_\(8668655194\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fireweed_Groundsel_leaves_(8668655194).jpg)). Photo 3 Juan Campà, MGAP, Bugwood.org. (<https://www.weedimages.org/browse/detail.cfm?imgnum=5558940>). Photo 4 John Robert McPherson: (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Senecio_madagascariensis_7th_Brigade_Park_Chernside_IMG1871.jpg). Photo 5 Forrest & Kim Starr, Photo # starr-001228_0149: (http://www.hear.org/pier/imagepages/singles/starr_001228_0149_senecio_madagascariensis.htm).

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