

Giant sensitive plant (450)

Summary

- Widespread. Africa, Asia, North, South and Central America, Caribbean, Europe, Oceania. In most Pacific islands.
- Important, invasive, weed of plantations, upland rice, food crop gardens, pastures, roadsides, waste sites. Fast growing, smothering other species, flowering early and producing much seed with long survival. Cattle avoid it.
- Stems, 4-sided with short, stiff, backward-pointing thorns. Leaves, alternate along stems, bright green, 10-20 cm long, divided into 4-9 pairs of leaf-like segments, each with 12-30 pairs of leaflets. Flowerheads, a cluster of pink to purple, individual flowers, with long stamens forming fluffy balls, on short prickly stalks. Seedpods, soft, spiny, in clusters, breaking into 2-4, 1-seeded parts.
- Spread: seeds by birds, other animals, clothing, in flowing water; use as a ground cover; moved in road materials; as pasture seed contaminant.
- Biosecurity: high risk of introduction. Among 10 worst weeds in Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands. In Australia, 'restricted invasive plant': do not release into environment, give away or sell.
- Biocontrol: *Heteropsylla spinulosa*, psyllid, introduced into Australia, PNG, Samoa. Fungus, *Corynespora cassicola*, has potential.
- Cultural control: before flowering, hand weed (use gloves or hoe!) or slash; vehicle hygiene.
- Chemical control: in Australia: dicamba; diuron; fluroxypyr; glufosinate-ammonium. In Fiji, glyphosate. Apply to regrowth after slashing or burning.

Common Name

Giant sensitive plant; it is also known as *nila grass* in Papua New Guinea. CABI prefers the name creeping sensitive plant. CABI calls *Mimosa pigra*, giant sensitive plant.

Scientific Name

Mimosa diplotricha. It was known previously as *Mimosa invisa*. It is a member of the Fabaceae.



Photo 1. Thicket of giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*.



Photo 2. Individual plant, giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*, showing stem, leaves and flowers.



Photo 3. Backward-pointing thorns, giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*.



Photo 4. Leaves of giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*. Note, leaflets of the central leaf have collapsed.



Photo 5. Flowerhead of giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*. Note, the fruits, left and beneath the stem, and the backward, curved thorns on the stem and leaf stalk.



Photo 6. Close-up fluffy flowerhead of giant sensitive plant, *Mimosa diplotricha*, showing long stamens.

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Adapted from Giant sensitive weed (*Mimosa diplotricha*) (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 ¹Waterhouse DF, Norris KR (1987) *Mimosa invisa* Martius ex Colla. *Biological Control Pacific Prospects*. Inkata Press, Melbourne; and CABI (2019) *Mimosa diplotricha* (giant sensitive plant). Crop Protection Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/cpc/restricted/?target=%2fcp%2fdatasheet%2f34196>); and from DAF (2020) Giant sensitive plant *Mimosa diplotricha* (= *Mimosa invisa*). The State of Queensland. (https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/67121/giant-sensitive-plant.pdf). Photo 1 Obsidian Soul Giant_false_sensitive_plant_(Mimosa_diplotricha)_from_Mindanao,_Philippines_1. Photo 4 Challyan at m.wikipedia. Photo 5 Ks.mini Giant Sensitive plant Name Mimosa diplotricha Family Fabaceae.

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