

# Bellyache Bush

## *Jatropha gossypifolia*

Bellyache bush is declared a **Class A (to be eradicated)**, **Class B (growth and spread to be controlled)** and **Class C (not to be introduced)** weed in the Northern Territory and is a **Weed of National Significance in Australia**.

Bellyache bush is a declared weed in accordance with the *Weeds Management Act*.

Bellyache bush reduces production values and increases land management costs. Bellyache bush populations can gradually replace native plant communities, forming dense monospecific stands which can negatively impact ecological functioning and pastoral production. Bellyache bush is poisonous to both humans and stock if ingested.

### HABIT



Bellyache bush is an erect, perennial shrub that can grow up to 4m in height, with most plants averaging between 2 - 3m.

### STEMS & BRANCHES



Bellyache bush is a multi-stemmed bush. The stems, leaf stalks and leaf margins are covered with coarse, gland tipped, sticky, brown hairs.

### LEAVES



Leaves alternate, and are divided into 3 - 5 segments. Leaf lobes are pointed. The 'Darwin Purple' has predominantly purple/red foliage and the 'Katherine Green' has green foliage.

### FLOWERS



The small, red flowers have yellow centres and are found in clusters around the top part of the plant.

### FRUIT



The fruit capsules are oblong, approximately 1cm in diameter and contain 3 - 4 seeds. Each seed is about 8mm long.

Weed Management Officers from the Weed Management Branch can provide advice on all aspects of weed management including control techniques, biological control, legislative responsibilities, policy advice, monitoring and reporting and regional planning. For further information on weed management planning, integrated control, herbicide application techniques and monitoring please refer to the [NT Weed Management Handbook](#). The Bellyache bush Weed Management Plan and Management Guide can be found at [www.nt.gov.au/environment/weeds/weed-management-planning](http://www.nt.gov.au/environment/weeds/weed-management-planning).