

# POND APPLE

## WEED OF THE MONTH

### WANTED: POND APPLE

Pond apple (*Annona glabra*) is a small to medium size tree that forms dense stands, particularly in swampy areas.

Pond apple invades fresh, brackish and saltwater areas, with the capability of replacing whole ecosystems.



Originally introduced to Australia as a grafting stock for commercially grown custard apple in 1912, it still remains as a root stock in old orchards. Pond apple is native to America and Africa.

The tree has become a major environmental weed in the wet tropics and Far North Queensland, with smaller infestations occurring in South-East Queensland. Due to the capability of changing ecosystems, Pond apple is a Weed of National Significance.

Here are some tips to help you identify Pond apple:

- Can reach a height of 15m, however commonly grows to 3-6m.
- Pond apple trees are usually single-stemmed, but when seeds germinate in groups the plants have a multi-stemmed appearance. Over time these stems may fuse together, giving the appearance of a single plant. The tree has soft wood and thin grey bark.
- The upper surface of the leaves varies from light to dark green. The outside of the leaves is paler.
- Crushed leaves have a distinctive smell, similar to a carrot.
- The flowers are pale creamy yellow, with three outer petals and three smaller inner petals and a bright red inner base.
- The flowers appear from December to February, with fruit forming from January to March. From February to April the fruit falls and matures on the ground.
- The spherical fruit is green with the appearance of a custard apple. The ripe fruit is yellow/orange.
- Each fruit contains 100-200 seeds that are similar in size and shape to pumpkin seeds.

### USEFUL CONTACTS

#### Online

- [www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/herbarium/identify-specimens](http://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/plants/herbarium/identify-specimens)
- [www.cook.qld.gov.au/services/biosecurity/plants](http://www.cook.qld.gov.au/services/biosecurity/plants)

Please help us to target this invasive plant for early detection and eradication.

If you are unsure whether you have found Pond apple, or if you find another plant you want to be identified, send a sample to the Queensland Herbarium for identification. This is a free service, and instructions on how to collect and send a sample can be found at the Queensland Herbarium's website (listed above).

If your sample is Pond apple or another weed, contact Council's Biosecurity Services team for treatment or management plans.