



WOODY WEEDS

Bitou bush

Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. *rotundata*



Origin: Bitou bush was introduced to Australia from South Africa to revegetate and stabilise the dunes after sand mining in many coastal areas along the NSW coastline. Bitou bush has now become very invasive in our coastal ecosystems where it outcompetes and smothers native vegetation.

Identification: Bitou bush is a sprawling evergreen shrub and commonly grows up to 2 meters high.

Leaves are fleshy and green, grow between 3-7 cm in length, are rounded and taper at the base with small teeth on the margins. Younger leaves are often covered in a white cottony down.

Flowers are bright yellow with 11-13 petals approximately 2 cm in diameter, which grow in clusters at the branch tips.

Fruits are green berries which ripen black and each fruit has one seed which is bone-like in appearance and texture.

Flowering and seeding: Seeds ripen from June to September.

Dispersal: Birds and other animals spreading seed. Water, garden waste and by vehicles and equipment.

Control: Seed and fruit should be bagged and removed from site. Hand pull seedlings. Cut and paint more established plants. Branches can be cut into small pieces and left on site to mulch down.

For larger infestations check with your local council, weeds authority or catchment management authority to see if there are any spraying or biological control programs in place. Follow up is necessary.

Note: *Myoporum boninense* or Boobialla is a native often confused with bitou bush. It is similar with fleshy bright green leaves especially in juvenile stages. Make sure you are confident in identifying your weeds. Consult the resources list at the back of this booklet for more information about plant identification.