

Beach daisy

Arctotheca populifolia (P.J.Bergius) Norl. (Asteraceae)

What is it?

Arctotheca populifolia is native to the coastal areas of South Africa. In Australia, it is naturalised in coastal sands of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. It has a very limited distribution in Tasmania (for details see page five). *Arctotheca populifolia* is related to the common Cape weed (*Arctotheca calendula*).

What does it look like?

Arctotheca populifolia is a prostrate, rhizomatous perennial herb which can grow to a height of up to 30 cm. The leaves are mostly cauline (borne on the stem, i.e. not basal), with ovate leaf blades (2–6 cm long and 1.5–5 cm wide) and long petioles (up to 8 cm long). The leaf surfaces are densely covered with whitish hairs (more so on the underside of the leaves). The flower heads (daisy flowers consist of many small flowers grouped together in a single head termed a capitulum) are yellow, c. 20 mm diam., and are borne on the ends of long flower stalks (up to 11 cm long). Flowering occurs throughout the year. The seeds (3–5 mm long) are covered in woolly white hair.

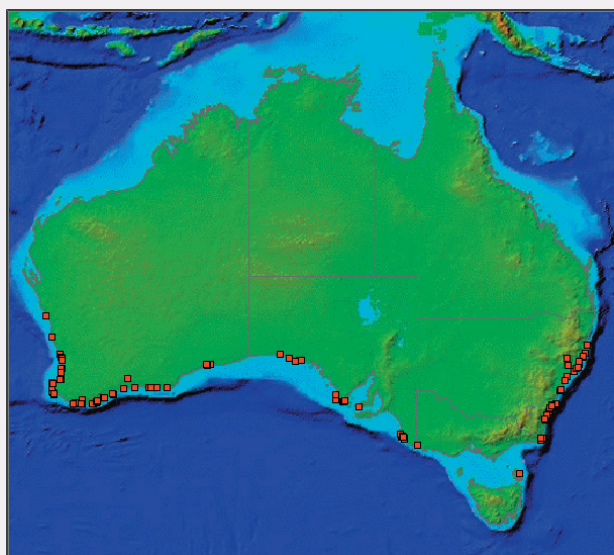
What is its weed potential?

Arctotheca populifolia is a pioneer species which colonises coastal sand dunes. It is also known to invade grassland on basalt soils.

Given its widespread distribution along Australia's Southern coastline it is highly likely that it could become more widespread as a coastal weed in Tasmania. If left unchecked, *Arctotheca populifolia* may increase the vegetation biomass on Tasmanian coastal dune systems, threaten native plant biodiversity and shorebird nesting habitats, alter beach landforms and affect public amenity values. The management of *Arctotheca populifolia* is addressed in Rudman 2003: *Tasmanian Beach Weed Strategy for marram grass, sea spurge, sea wheatgrass, pypgrass & beach*

daisy. (See www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/Publications/LJEM-5ZL9XW?open)

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Distribution of *Arctotheca populifolia*
(Source: Australia's Virtual Herbarium)



Flowering head and leaf of *Arctotheca populifolia*