Balloon cotton is a pest plant of pastures, disturbed areas, roadsides and wastelands. The plant is known to be a poisonous plant for stock, but is rarely eaten in enough quantities to cause serious problems.

Invasive plant which can disrupt native flora communities and ecosystems.

**Description**

Balloon cotton is a slender erect perennial with milky sap usually growing to less than 2m in height.

The balloon shaped seed pods with their soft spines are the most distinctive feature of the plant.

Inside are many seeds attached to long white tufts of silky hairs.

Flowers are creamy-white and grow in clusters from the forks of the upper leaves. The wanderer butterfly caterpillar can often be seen eating the leaves of the weed.

**Management**

The plant is generally an invader of disturbed lands – whether that is soil disturbance or overgrazing. So, prevention of soil disturbance and the maintenance of a strong and healthy pasture will prevent the weed from taking over.

Plants can easily be hand pulled, especially when the soil is moist. Plants containing seed pods should be removed and disposed of at an appropriate waste management facility, as the seeds can continue maturing if left on-site.