Mikania vine
*Mikania micrantha*

Mikania vine is a rapidly growing, scrambling perennial vine with many branches. It has the potential to spread throughout humid regions of northern Australia, and poses a major threat to agricultural production and the environment in these areas. The weed has the ability to spread rapidly and smother native vegetation, crops and agricultural infrastructure.

If it becomes established in Australia, mikania vine has the potential to cause serious damage to agricultural industries (including sugarcane, tropical fruit and vegetable production), as well as damage the natural environment and affect the habitat of native animals.

Mikania vine thrives in open areas as well as in partial shade and disturbed areas. It can grow up through a closed forest and become canopy emergent.

**Description**

The leaves of mikania vine are smooth and heart-shaped. They are 4–13cm in length and taper to an acute point. The leaves have three main veins that arise from the base of the leaf. The leaf stalk is 2–8cm long and the leaves are arranged in opposite pairs along the stem.

The stems of the mikania vine are slender, ribbed and bear fine, white hairs. The lateral stems are as vigorous as the main stem and it is often difficult to distinguish between the two.

The flowers of the mikania vine are white to greenish-white and are produced in clusters mainly at the ends of stems growing in full sunlight. Each flower head is 4–6mm long and contains four individual flowers.

Mikania vine produces tufted seeds which are equipped for wind dispersal. The seeds are black, 1.5–2mm long, thin and five-angled. The seed tufts (pappus) consist of over 30 fine white hairs or bristles. The pappus is longer than the seed itself.

Importantly, when mixed with the soil, mikania vine debris produces toxins that inhibit the growth of other vegetation, such as native plants and agricultural crops.
Mikania vine flowers from May to June and September to October or between these periods in July and August. Plants will also flower heavily out of season in areas exposed to full sunlight.

**Management**

Small plants can be completely destroyed by manual removal and preventing soil-plant contact while the plants desiccate. As mikania vine grows readily from plant fragments, it is important that the roots of large vines and all live plant fragments are removed and destroyed.

All suspected infestations should be reported to Biosecurity Queensland, who will develop a site-specific eradication program with the relevant landholder.

If you would like further information on mikania vine, look at the A–Z Listing of Weeds at [Queensland Government Website](#).

**Reference:** Land Protection (Invasive Plants and Animals), 2007, “PP143, Weed Busters Fact Sheet”, the State of Queensland, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.