Mini data sheet on *Striga* spp.

Added in 2000 – Deleted in 2000

Reasons for deletion
The Panel on Phytosanitary Measures considered that the weeds *Striga lutea, S. hermonthica* and *S. gesnerioides* did not have the characters of an alert. In 2000, they were therefore removed from the EPPO Alert List.

Striga spp. (Scrophulariaceae) – witchweeds

Why	The Panel on Phytosanitary Measures is currently discussing the potential quarantine status of weeds, and *Striga lutea, S. hermonthica* and *S. gesnerioides* were retained as potential candidates.
Where	*Striga lutea* **Asia**: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam. **Africa**: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Réunion, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sudan, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe. **North America**: USA (North Carolina, South Carolina). **Oceania**: Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea. *Striga hermonthica* **Asia**: Cambodia, Saudi Arabia, Yemen. **Africa**: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe. *Striga gesnerioides* **Asia**: Cambodia, India, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Yemen. **Africa**: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe. **North America**: USA (Florida) **Oceania**: Australia
On which crops	*Striga lutea*: Poaceae, especially maize, sorghum, rice and sugarcane, but also sometimes on wheat and barley. Wild plants and weeds of the following genera: *Digitaria*, *Echinochloa*, *Imperata*, *Paspalum*, *Pennisetum*, *Sorghum.* *Striga hermonthica*: Poaceae, especially sorghum but also maize, *Panicum*, *Setaria*, sugarcane. *Striga gesnerioides*: especially on cowpea and tobacco. Also on numerous plants of the Poaceae, Fabaceae and Convolvulaceae.
Damage	*Striga lutea* and *S. hermonthica* are annual hemi-parasites of monocotyledones, *S. gesnerioides* is a full parasite of dicotyledons. Greatest damage is done in the first month of vegetative growth, when the fully parasitic young witchweeds have not yet emerged. The host plant wilts, its growth is stunted and it may shrivel and die. Yield losses can reach significant levels (up to 100%).
Dissemination	As seeds are very small they are easily dispersed by wind, water, animals, etc. Seeds can also contaminate harvested products, or be moved in soil by machinery etc. Seeds are very difficult to detect as contaminants of seed lots (microscopic examination is needed).
Pathway	Contaminated seed lots, fodder, soil and growing media, soil attached to plants.

Possible risks

Witchweeds are essentially tropical pests, but *S. lutea* has been found in North and South Carolina (US) and has been able to maintain populations. The potential for establishment in the EPPO region of *Striga* spp. remains unclear. Regions with a relatively mild dry winter (Black Sea area, eastern Mediterranean region, North Africa) may be suitable for weed development. Chemical control is available, and research is being done on the use of resistant cultivars.

Source(s):

Draft EPPO Data Sheet.
Banda, E.A.K.; Morris, B. (1985) Common weeds of Malawi. Montfort Press, Malawi, 176 pp.
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Parker, C.; Riches, C.R. (1993) Parasitic weeds of the world: biology and control. CABI, Wallingford, UK, 332 pp.

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