

***Heteropsylla* sp. (Psyllidae) Successfully Controls Pasture Infestations of *Mimosa invisa* Within Three Years of Release in Australia**

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Mimosa invisa, native to tropical America, is a spiny, aggressive, rampant weed of Southeast Asia and many Pacific countries including the tropical east coast of northern Australia. The biological control agent *Heteropsylla* sp. was introduced into Australia from Brazil in 1987 by the Queensland Department of Lands. Within 2 yrs of commencing field releases, this tiny sap-sucking bug widely dispersed into all pasture infestations of *M. invisa*. Feeding damage resulted in dense clumps reduced to small masses of bare stems with stunted growing tips that allowed other plant species to re-establish. Severely affected plants produced very few seeds. Evaluations at 2 sites in 1989 and 1990 have shown a reduction in annual seed production ranging from 85-100%. In crop situations (e.g., cane, banana), biological control of *M. invisa* is variable due to intensive agricultural methods such as harvesting, slashing, fire and pesticide use. Extreme weather conditions reduced the abundance and effect of *Heteropsylla*.
