

Downy rose myrtle (*Rhodomyrtus tomentosa*)

MYRTACEAE FAMILY



GROWTH HABIT

Downy rose myrtle (*Rhodomyrtus tomentosa*) is a fast-growing evergreen shrub that usually grows to 6 feet but can reach up to 12 feet. It may be confused with *Lyonia* before it flowers. Young stems have short, dense hairs. **Flowering** occurs in spring and early summer with fruit ripening by fall. **Leaves** are opposite, entire, elliptic-oval, glossy above and densely hairy underneath with 3 dominant veins originating from the leaf base that are parallel to the margin. **Flowers** are showy rose-pink, ~1 inch across with 5 petals and numerous stamens with pink filaments and yellow anthers. **Fruits** are dark purple and globose like blueberries and about ½ inch in diameter. **Seeds** are tiny and number around 200 per berry.

DISTRIBUTION IN FLORIDA

Found in South and Central Florida as far north as Pasco and Brevard counties.

Table 1. Herbicide options for Downy rose myrtle.  
Herbicides are expressed on a (% v/v) by product basis.  
The label is the law. Always refer to product label before use.

HERBICIDE ACTIVE INGREDIENTS	PRODUCT(S)	-----Recommended Approach-----		
		FOLIAR	BASAL BARK	CUT STUMP
TRICLOPYR ESTER	GARLON 4	2%	10-20%	10-20%
AMINOCYCLOPYRACHLOR	METHOD	0.25-0.38%	NR	NR
IMAZAPYR + GLYPHOSATE	ARSENAL + ROUNDUP	1% + 2%	NR	NR
DICAMBA	VANQUISH	2 qt/A (1%)	NR	NR

NR= Not Recommended

NOTES SECTION

**Herbicide Notes for Downy rose myrtle:**

- Always consult the herbicide label for specific concentration recommendations. Downy rose myrtle has proven extremely difficult to manage due to resprouting and extensive seedling recruitment following initial treatment.
- Good coverage is required for all foliar treatments. Poor coverage on one side of the canopy can result in subsequent resprouting from the base on that side.
- Some resprouting may occur following triclopyr foliar treatment. The cut stump approach with triclopyr ester involves treating the stump top and the sides in a manner similar to basal bark application.

**Adjuvant Considerations:** Downy rose myrtle has an extremely leathery upper leaf surface and a hairy lower leaf surface. Methylated seed oils have been shown to enhance droplet spread for leaves with these characteristics.

**Seasonality of Treatments:** Treatments are generally effective throughout the year. Downy rose myrtle blooms in the spring so treatments should be applied by fall or winter to prevent seed production.

**Specific Hydrologic Considerations:** Downy rose myrtle tolerates wet season conditions in many flatwood environments. Method and Garlon 4 are fully labeled for use in uplands and seasonally dry wetlands but not when standing water is present.

**Specific Considerations for each Herbicide for Potential Non-Target Damage**

- Aminocyclopyrachlor may injure or kill cypress, beautyberry and several other trees, shrubs and forbs. While it is safe to apply under oaks, it is still generally recommended for IPT only.
- Imazapyr may injure or kill many other species and should not be used near desirable vegetation, especially oaks.
- Triclopyr ester may be volatile at temps > 85 F.
- Dicamba may volatilize extensively when air temperatures are greater than 85 F and has caused significant nontarget damage to surrounding trees and shrubs. Because of this, dicamba is not recommended in most situations.

**Retreatment Interval Consideration:** Downy rose myrtle produces copious quantities of viable seed which readily germinate. Although seed longevity studies have not been conducted in Florida, seed germination is common in the year of and the year following treatment. Downy rose myrtle reaches sexual maturity in three to four years. Given these factors and it tendency to resprout following initial treatment, follow-up treatments are necessary on a three year rotation to prevent new seed production.

**Calculations for % v/v:** (Volumes must be in the same units, i.e., gallons, ounces, liters, etc).

% v/v = (Volume of herbicide product / total herbicide plus carrier volume) \* 100%

Reference Table for % v/v

% V/V	Ounces of herbicide to add for 1 gallon (128 oz) total mix size
0.25	0.32
0.5	0.64
1.0	1.28
2.0	2.56
5.0	6.4
10.0	12.8
20.0	25.6