



HOW TO MASTER CEDAR:

Individual Plant Treatment Leaf and Spot Spray Applications or Top Removal Method

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Cedars can be very aggressive and damaging woody plants on Texas rangelands. There are two major cedar species west of Interstate 35: redberry cedar and blueberry cedar.

It is important to know which species you have because treatments vary. As the names imply, blueberry cedar has blue berries, and redberry cedar has red berries. In addition, redberry cedar has small specks of white wax on its leaves and twigs. Blueberry cedar is more common in Central and South-Central Texas, while redberry cedar is more common in West, West-Central, and North-Central Texas. It is not uncommon for the two species to occur together.

Brush Busters recommends three ways to control cedar that are easy, inexpensive, environmentally responsible, and effective. Two herbicide treatments—leaf spray and soil spot spray—work best on cedar less than 3 feet tall. The top removal method, which involves cutting the tree at ground level, will control blueberry cedar, but redberry cedar must be grubbed (cut) below the soil surface.

These Brush Busters control methods were developed and approved by professionals with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas A&M AgriLife Research, both agencies of the Texas A&M University System. Your results may vary with weather and other plant conditions, but you should usually be able to kill 76 to 100 percent of trees you treat.

It is very important to control cedar as seedlings and saplings. Controlling mature cedars requires heavy equipment or large amounts of herbicides and is usually very expensive. Controlling cedar is not a one-time job. Livestock and wildlife spread the seeds easily, so you will need to check your land occasionally and treat unwanted seedlings.

BRUSH BUSTERS LEAF SPRAY METHOD

Works well on: Blueberry or redberry cedars that are less than 3 feet tall.

When to apply: Spring through summer when cedar is actively growing.

1. Prepare the Equipment

Many types of sprayers work well for this method. Backpack sprayers are the most efficient for small acreage places or those

with a high density of cedar trees. Larger places with lower densities may find ATV or UTV sprayers more efficient. Before you start spraying, make sure that you have an adjustable nozzle, such as the Conejet™ 5500-X6 or X8 nozzle that can deliver a coarse spray with larger droplets.

2. Mix the Herbicide Spray

A mixture of picloram herbicide (trade names: Tordon 22K, Triumph 22K, or Picloram 22K) in water is very effective for this method. To make sure foliage is coated thoroughly, add a high-quality (80 to 90 percent active ingredient) non-ionic surfactant to the spray mix. Add a dye, such as Hi-Light™ blue dye, to mark plants that have been sprayed and ensure proper coverage (see table on next page).



3. Spray the Cedar

Adjust the nozzle to deliver a coarse spray in a wide pattern. Wet ALL the leaves of each cedar plant to the point of runoff.

Keep These Points in Mind:

- ▶ Follow herbicide label directions.
- ▶ For best results, do not spray when:
 - Leaves are wet from rain or dew
 - Working upwind of desirable trees, shrubs, or crops
- ▶ The cost of treatment increases rapidly as the density and size of cedars increase. Download the Brush Busters Cost Calculator app to easily estimate treatment costs.
- ▶ Large, mature blueberry cedar may be a nesting habitat for the endangered golden-cheeked warbler. If in doubt, contact the United States Fish and Wildlife Service before treating.
- ▶ Do not spray within 100 feet of known sinkholes or fractures that would allow herbicide to enter underground water aquifers.
- ▶ Do not treat large numbers of cedars beneath canopies or within three times the height or diameter of desirable trees such as oaks or pecans.

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RECOMMENDED LEAF SPRAY HERBICIDE MIX OPTIONS*

Ingredient	Concentration in Spray Solution	Tank Size			
		1 gal	3 gal	14 gal	25 gal
Picloram herbicide	1%	1.28 oz	4 oz	18 oz	32 oz
Surfactant	0.25%	0.32 oz	1 oz	4.5 oz	8 oz
Hi-Light™ blue dye	0.25–0.5%	0.32–0.64 oz	1–2 oz	4.5–9 oz	8–16 oz

*All leaf spray solutions are mixed in water.

BRUSH BUSTERS SPOT SPRAY METHOD

Works well on: Blueberry or redberry cedars that are less than 3 feet tall.

When to apply: Late winter to mid-spring (ideally before expected rainfall).

1. Prepare the Equipment

Soil spot sprays should be applied with an exact-delivery handgun. This piece of equipment is available from most herbicide retail outlets. The handgun delivers a thin stream of predetermined volume when triggered. Adjust the handgun to deliver 2 milliliters (cc) for each pull of the trigger. If only a few plants are to be treated, a disposable syringe can be used. Thoroughly clean all spray equipment immediately after use.

2. Prepare the Herbicide

Velpar L™ is a recommended herbicide for soil spot sprays to control cedar. The herbicide is used undiluted by attaching an exact-delivery handgun or syringe to the herbicide container. Pronone Power Pellet™ can also be used. Each pellet is equivalent to 2 ml (cc) of Velpar L™.

3. Apply the Herbicide

Apply undiluted Velpar L™ or Pronone Power Pellet™ to the soil surface midway between the cedar stem and the canopy edge. Apply 2 ml for every 3 feet of plant height or every 3 feet of plant canopy diameter (whichever is greater). If plant size requires more than a single 2 ml application, space applications equally around the plant. Apply each 2 ml dose to a single spot on the soil surface. On slopes, apply most of the herbicide on the uphill side of the stem.



Keep These Points in Mind:

- ▶ Follow herbicide label directions.
- ▶ Do not use on marshy or poorly drained sites.
- ▶ Do not use on clay soils.
- ▶ Do not apply to snow-covered or frozen ground.
- ▶ Do not apply within three times the height or canopy diameter (whichever is greater) of desirable trees such as oaks or pecans.
- ▶ Rainfall is required to “activate” Velpar L™ or Pronone Power Pellet™ in the soil. Plants will begin to show symptoms within 3 to 6 weeks of initial rainfall. One to three growing seasons may be required before plants die. During this time, cedars usually sprout new leaves several times.
- ▶ Grasses and weeds will be killed where each spot of Velpar L™ or Pronone Power Pellet™ is applied. Recovery may take 2 to 3 years.
- ▶ The cost of treatment rises rapidly as the density and size of cedar increases.

BRUSH BUSTERS TOP REMOVAL METHOD

Blueberry cedar: Remove the plant top at or near the ground line with a chainsaw, pruner, axe, etc. Seedlings (plants less than 2 feet tall) can be killed easily by hand grubbing.

Redberry cedar: Since redberry cedar re-sprouts, top removal will not effectively control plants that are over 8 to 10 years old. Redberry cedar seedlings (plants less than 2 feet tall) can be easily killed if they are grubbed below the basal “knob,” located at or slightly beneath the soil surface.

