

Climbing asparagus

(*Asparagus scandens*)

Is Climbing asparagus on your property?

Climbing asparagus is included in Horizon's Regional Pest Plant Management Strategy as a Site-led plant. This means the plant is widespread throughout the region and will only be controlled in and around significant high-value natural areas or other sites that are deemed to be at risk. If you see any sites where it is growing or can help with details of the plant, please contact us on free phone 0508 800 800.



Identification

Slender scrambling or climbing perennial. Tuberos roots. Stems 2-4 m long, green and multi-branched at the top. Branches are thick and wiry. Leaves are flat cladodes (resembling the native tree Miro), usually in threes at each node. Flowers tiny whitish from September-December. Round berry, 8 mm diameter, green turning orange-red from October-February, with 1-2 seeds.

Weedy characteristics

Tolerates moderate-high shade, most soil types, moderate-high rainfall, hot to cold. Forms dense patches on ground or sub-canopy in most forest types. Tough, long-lived tubers will resprout at will with a moderate growth rate. Seeds well dispersed.

Methods of dispersal

Mainly dispersed by birds, especially blackbirds. Tubers resprout, survive removal.

Impact on indigenous plants

Smothers forest floor and understorey to 4m to prevent recruitment and growth. Raises light levels, causing ingress of further weeds. Can ringbark and kill soft-barked shrubs and trees. Invades epiphyte perches, replacing already vulnerable species.

Typical habitats

Disturbed and intact lowland and coastal forest, shrublands, mature broadleaf and/or podocarp forests, epiphyte niches, forest edges.

Control

1. Spray: glyphosate 2%. Do not add penetrant when spraying against tree trunks. Spring-early Summer only. Spray lightly, avoiding runoff, total coverage not required. Autumn-Winter spray only in frost-free areas on healthy growth, increase rate to 3%.
2. Dig out tubers. Dispose. Mulch stems.
3. Weed wiper: glyphosate 33%, no penetrant. Total coverage not required.

Site management

Maintain rolling front to control. Work out from inner bush. Follow up at least 6-monthly. Short seed life. Replant treated areas where possible after 2-3 treatments to establish dense ground cover and minimise reinvasion.

Species recovery

Tubers usually resprout after spraying; stems break at ground level so plants cannot be pulled. Tuber fragments survive digging.

For more information freephone 0508 800 800.

