

Gorse

(Ulex europaeus)

Is Gorse on your property?

Gorse is included in Horizon's Regional Pest Plant Management Strategy as a Boundary Control plant. Gorse will largely be managed through a boundary control regime and enforcement will be request driven. Efforts to maintain clean land should be recognised and regulations enforcing boundary clearance will be adhered to. If you see any sites of infestation, please contact us on freephone 0508 800 800



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Identification

Sharp spiny shrub 2-3m tall. Stems erect or spreading, woody. Many-branched at top but becoming bare at base. Leaves reduced to spines which are deeply furrowed. Flowers pea-like, yellow in May-Nov. and occasionally all year round. Seed pod hairy, turning black, explosive.

Weedy characteristics

Habitat varied. Massive numbers of long-lived seeds. Tolerant of hot to cold, high to low rainfall, wind, salt, damage and grazing, all soils. Rapid growth, quick maturing. Intolerant to shade.

Methods of dispersal

Explosive seed to 5m. Seed can be spread by soil and gravel movement by contaminated machinery. Also associated with animals, hedgerows, roadsides, waste land, farms, quarries, forest tracks, metal dumps, fire breaks, exotic forests, skid sites, riverbeds.

Impact on indigenous plants

Forms pure associations in many habitats, inhibiting new species. Increases nitrogen in impoverished soil types (eg gumland, sand dunes) may induce establishment of forest species, to the detriment of specialised plants, eg herbs, orchids, low ferns. Can have positive impacts on bared ex-forest sites, acts as nursery crop for native species, adds humus, windbreak and shade.

Typical habitats

River systems, shrublands, forest margins, coastline, tussockland, fernland, wetland, consolidated sand dunes, cliffs, disturbed forest, exotic plantations, poor pasture, bare land.

Control

1. Introduce biocontrol agents wherever possible.
2. Stump swab: Grazon or Tordon BK at 10%; or Escort 5 g/L. All year round.
3. Spray: Grazon or Renovate at label rates. Spring-summer.
4. Spray: Escort + penetrant' or Tordon BK. Autumn-winter.

Site management

Do not burn or graze. Only use glyphosate spray when all vegetation on site is to be bared for replanting. Maintain humus layer. Sites with appropriate tall forest species can usually be left to shade out gorse. Can speed eradication by selective slashing, stump swabbing or planting. Maintain roadsides, cuttings and other vectors.

Species recovery

Stumps resprout quickly. Reseeds profusely, especially after fire, disturbance or non-selective spraying.

For more information please contact us on freephone 0508 800 800.

