

Himalayan Honeysuckle

Leycesteria formosa

**Progressive Control Plant under the
West Coast Regional Pest Plant
Management Strategy**



National Pest Plant Accord Status

Himalayan Honeysuckle is not listed on the 2008 National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA), i.e. it's not currently banned from sale, propagation and distribution in New Zealand. However as of 2011, it is listed as a pest plant in a number of New Zealand regions including Auckland, Canterbury, Bay of Plenty and the West Coast (where control is required in the Coast Road Progressive Control Area).

Where has Himalayan Honeysuckle come from?

Himalayan Honeysuckle is native to temperate, lowland areas of the Himalayas. It was introduced to New Zealand originally as a garden plant, but has long since jumped the fence to become a pest plant in the wild.

What does Himalayan Honeysuckle look like?

Himalayan Honeysuckle is a perennial, many stemmed deciduous or semi-deciduous plant which grows 2-3 m tall. Stems are cane-like being green and hollow, becoming more "woody" with age. Leaves are up to 15cms long, heart-shaped, and arranged as opposite pairs on the stems. Terminal, drooping spikes of white funnel shaped flowers (3-8cm long) with deep reddish-purple bracts appear from December until May. These are followed by juicy, dark brownish-purple berries (7-10mm in diameter) containing abundant seed.

In New Zealand, Himalayan Honeysuckle thrives in a range of soils and climate conditions but is intolerant of deep shade and not long lived.

Why is Himalayan Honeysuckle a Pest Plant?

The abundant seed set by Himalayan Honeysuckle is spread by birds and the wind with the plants favouring light gaps, i.e. on slips, wasteland, forest margins and further into the forest where there have been windfalls creating natural light gaps. It can also compete with young plantation trees in forestry blocks.

Once established dense thickets are formed preventing revegetation of native species, paving the way for other weeds, particularly vine infestations. Whilst plants are not long-lived, they can change natural forest ecosystems.

Top right: Himalayan Honeysuckle flowers [A Paltridge]

At right: Himalayan Honeysuckle leaf detail. [AC]



What are the best methods of control?

Depending on the size of the infestation, a range of control methods may be needed to eradicate Himalayan Honeysuckle. Repeat applications will probably be needed for large infestations.

Manual Methods

Handpull or dig out small plants and leave to rot on ground or compost.

Herbicide Methods

For established plants there are two main choices, depending on the size of the infestation and whether or not you want to retain other nearby plants.

- **Stump swabbing:** cut the cane-like stems down to 15-20cms and immediately apply herbicide concentrate with a brush (Glyphosate or other choice of herbicide) or applicator (Vigilant Gel).
- **Spraying:** suitable herbicides include those containing the active ingredients Triclopyr (e.g. Grazon, Victory), Triclopyr - Picloram mixes (e.g. Tordon Gold), Metsulfuron (e.g. Escort, Zeal) or Glyphosate (e.g. Glyphosate 360, Roundup, Watkins Weedkiller etc). Apply with a handgun or knapsack sprayer at the standard recommended rate for the product chosen. A penetrant may also be needed. Examples are:

Handgun: Use Metsulfuron/Escort at rate of 35gms/100L water + 100mls penetrant

Knapsack Sprayer: Use Glyphosate 360/ Roundup at rate of 10mls/10L water

For personal safety please use all herbicides as per manufacturer's labelling

Biocontrols

There are no known biocontrols for Himalayan Honeysuckle at present.

Where can I get more help?

For further information call either of the Regional Weedbusters Co-ordinators. They are:

Mary Traves: Environmental Information Officer, West Coast Regional Council (768 0466 or 0508 800 118)

Tom Belton: Technical Support Officer Biosecurity & Weeds, Department of Conservation, West Coast - Tai Poutini Conservancy, Hokitika (03 756 9100)



www.weedbusters.org.nz

The West Coast Regional Council does not accept liability for any advice given on this sheet regarding application of herbicides for pest plant control. The brand names listed imply neither endorsement of those brands, nor criticism of any other brands not listed.