

Coltsfoot

Tussilago farfara

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



Suspected sightings of this Total Control Plant should be reported promptly to the West Coast Regional Council

National Pest Plant Accord Status

Coltsfoot is listed in the 2008 National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) and is banned from sale, propagation and distribution in New Zealand. For more information refer to the MAF Biosecurity New Zealand website at www.biosecurity.govt.nz/nppa

Where has Coltsfoot come from?

Coltsfoot originated from Europe and Asia and was brought to New Zealand by Chinese goldminers as a herbal remedy. Some of the Chinese worked at Arthurs Pass on the Otira Tunnel and the plant has spread downstream on the east side into Canterbury and to a lesser extent on the west side into the Taramakau River catchment on the west side.

What does Coltsfoot look like?

Coltsfoot is a perennial mat-forming herb with stout rootstock and long rhizomes. The plant is distinguished by large (3-20cm diameter) kidney shaped leaves which are finely toothed at the margins. The top surface is smooth and green but the underside is covered with greyish-white woolly hairs. The leaves appear after flowers have faded and set seed. The dandelion-like yellow flowers appear in early spring, and are followed dandelion-like seed heads. The plants die back in autumn. Coltsfoot is spread via wind set seed and spreading rhizomes. Preferred habitat is damp, disturbed ground, e.g. along water-courses and on scree slopes or slips.



*Top right: Coltsfoot leaves form a mat [ARC]
Above: Coltsfoot in flower [MAF / BNZ]*

Why is Coltsfoot a Pest Plant?

Coltsfoot is a robust and aggressive plant which can quickly forms dense mats along waterways and on disturbed slopes. It can spread fast via rhizomes being broken off (to lodge further downstream) and wind dispersed seed. The roots and flowers contain alkaloids that can cause liver damage if the plant is grazed.

On the West Coast Coltsfoot is a Total Control Plant meaning that if found all steps must be taken by property owners to ensure its eradication.

What are the best methods of control?

The best method of control is to ensure that Coltsfoot is not brought to the West Coast. If plants are found, and a control method below used, follow-up will be necessary on a 3 monthly basis to prevent rhizome regrowth.

Manual Methods

Small patches can be dug out carefully, ensuring no part rhizomes are left, and disposed of to a lined landfill.

Herbicide Methods

For small patches spot treat or weedwipe during spring and summer using:

- Escort 1g/L + penetrant
- Glyphosate 33% + penetrant.

For larger areas spray during spring or summer using:

- Escort + penetrant at same rate as ragwort
- Glyphosate 1% + penetrant.

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

Biocontrols

There are no known biocontrol agents for Coltsfoot 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.