Ash

Fraxinus excelsior

www.weedbusters.org.nz

Family
Oleaceae (olive)

Also known as
Common ash, golden ash, European ash

Where is it originally from?
Europe, West Asia, North Africa

Photo: Trevor James

What does it look like?
Large, deciduous tree (<30 m), with irregular, spreading crown, scattered branchlets with corky white pores, and large, black leaf buds. Large leaves are made up of 9-13 pointed leaflets (<10 x 3.5 cm) with serrated margins, paired along the midrib, which is hairy on the underside. Flowers lack petals, are very small and purple, appear in dense clusters (Sept -Oct) before the leaves, and are followed by seeds (1.2-1.5 mm long) with a large wing (2.7-4 cm long) attached to one end. Seeds mature in autumn.

Photo: Trevor James

Are there any similar species?
Several species of ash are cultivated in New Zealand. *F. excelsior* can be distinguished by the number of leaflets and green midrib.

Why is it weedy?
Large size, long life, and fast growth rate make this a problem weed. Tolerates full sun to part shade, and rich to poor soils.

How does it spread?
Seed is dispersed by wind.

What damage does it do?
Competes with native species for space, and shades smaller plants and trees.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?
Riverflats, forest, shrubland, scrub and waste places.

What can I do to get rid of it?
1. Physical removal - Hand pull small plants, or dig out entire plant including roots (all year round). Leave on site to rot down.
2. Cut and paste (all year round) - Cut the stem/trunk as close to the ground as possible and cover the entire stump with herbicide as soon as possible after cutting. Apply either glyphosate gel (120g/L strength) or metsulfuron gel (10g/l strength) to the entire cut stem.
3. Drill or frill - Drill downward sloping holes around the circumference of the trunk about 8-10 cm apart, or Frill (make deep cuts into the sapwood at regular intervals around the base of the tree, taking care not to ring-bark the plant). Fill the holes or saturate the cuts with metsulfuron-methyl 600 g/kg (20-50g/L + penetrant
4. Foliar spray (full leaf stage only) - Apply herbicide using a hand held sprayer/knapsack to plants <1m tall or gun and hose for larger infestations. Apply glyphosate (360 g/L active ingredient) herbicide at 20ml/L plus organosilicone penetrant (2ml/L) to cover entire plant. Note: Glyphosate overspray will kill other (desirable) plants OR apply metsulfuron herbicide (600g/kg active ingredient at 0.5g/L knapsack or 20g/100L gun and hose) + organosilicone penetrant (3ml/L). Note: Metsulfuron overspray will kill other (desirable) broadleaf plants and has residual activity in the soil which aids in killing below grou
CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and directions for the purchase, use and storage of the product, are followed and adhered to.

What can I do to stop it coming back?
Monitor the site and treat any regrowth from the trunk or seedlings. Search out and remove the source of the infestation. Where appropriate plant native trees or shrubs to produce shade.

Photo: Trevor James