Himalayan honeysuckle  
*Leycesteria formosa*

**Family**
Caprifoliaceae (honeysuckle) family

**Where is it originally from?**
Himalayas

**What does it look like?**
Deciduous or semi-evergreen, many-stemmed perennial shrub to 2+ m with straight, hairless round stems (1-2 cm thick) that are hollow and green when young but become woody. Heart-shaped (occasionally 5-9 lobed) leaves (4-14 x 2-8 cm) are in opposite pairs on the stem. Terminal, drooping spikes (3-8 cm long) of white funnel-shaped flowers (15 mm long) with delicate deep reddish-purple bracts appear from December to May, followed by juicy, dark brownish-purple berries (7-10 mm diameter).

**Are there any similar species?**
Alternatives: How about a native kakabeak (*Clianthus puniceus*) which also has hanging red flowers, or taurepo (*Rhabdothamnus solandri*) with bell-shaped orange flowers? You could also try fuchsias or weigelas for a touch of colour.

**Why is it weedy?**
The few seeds it does produce are well dispersed by birds and water, and new plants quickly form dense thickets. It colonises light wells, slips and other gaps, quickly replacing native species that are trying to establish and causing invasion by other exotic species, especially vines by getting rid of native competition. Tolerates moderate to deep shade, frost, damage, damp, and most soils. Not long-lived, so eventually succeeded by other species.

**How does it spread?**
Birds and water disperse seeds. Common seed sources include plantation forest, roadsides, disturbed bush, and under hedges.

**What damage does it do?**
Colonises light wells, slips and other gaps, quickly replacing native pioneer species. Causes invasion by other exotic species, especially vines.

**Which habitats is it likely to invade?**
Wet forest, shrublands and margins, streamsides, damp gullies, and possibly areas that would usually be dominated by epiphytes.

**What can I do to get rid of it?**
1. Dig out (all year round). Leave on site to rot down.
2. Cut down and paint stump (all year round): or glyphosate (100ml/L) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (1g/L) or triclopyr 600 EC (100ml/L) or triclopyr 120g/L (500ml/L).
3. Spray (spring-summer): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/10L) or triclopyr 600 EC (30ml/10L) or triclopyr 120g/L (15ml/L).

**What can I do to stop it coming back?**
Stumps resprout so frequent followup required to ensure eradication. Remove pigs and other stock to minimise
erosion and the development of light wells. Replant sites where native species are slow to recover to prevent reseeding.