

# Coltsfoot

*Tussilago farfara*

## Family

Asteraceae (daisy)

## Also known as

Coughwort, dovedock, horse-hoof, clayweed, ginger root

## Where is it originally from?

Europe and Asia

## What does it look like?

Low-growing, mat-forming, summer-green perennial herb with stout rootstock and rhizomes. Shallowly-lobed kidney-shaped to round, or heart-shaped leaves (3-20 cm diameter) with finely toothed edges at the base of the plant are hairless above, woolly below, and on long hairy stalks. Erect flowering stem (5-30 cm tall) has 10 or more oval to triangular leaves (<1 cm long). Single yellow daisy-like flowers (6-10mm diameter) at top of stem (Oct) appear before leaves and are followed by hairy seed capsules (3-5 mm long). Dies back to rootstock over winter.

## Are there any similar species?

Winter heliotrope (*Petasites fragrans*) has pink-purple flowers and non-lobed leaves with large-toothed edges.

## Why is it weedy?

Matures and grows quickly, and has fast spreading rhizomes and a persistent rootstock. Produces very many, very well dispersed seeds. Tolerates very wet to occasionally dry conditions, moderate to cool temperatures, semi-shade, and damage.

## How does it spread?

Seed spread by wind, and rhizomes by soil and water movement.

## What damage does it do?

Forms dense mats in damp, disturbed sites, excluding other species.

## Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Short tussock, wetland, and bare land.

## What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Dig out very small patches (all year round): Dispose of at refuse transfer station or burn.
2. Spray (spring-summer): glyphosate (10ml/L + penetrant) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (1g/10L + penetrant).  
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?

Rootstock and rhizomes resprout so follow up 3 monthly until eradicated. Densely replant where appropriate to prevent reseeding.



[www.weedbusters.org.nz](http://www.weedbusters.org.nz)



Photo: Manfred von Tippelskirch



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Photo: Trevor James