

Mickey Mouse plant

Ochna serrulata

Family

Ochnaceae (ochna)

Also known as

Mickey mouse bush, bird's eye bush

Where is it originally from?

Southern Africa

What does it look like?

Erect, evergreen shrub (<2 m tall) with slightly rough stems finely spotted with light brown. Spirally arranged, narrow and oblong leaves (<5 cm long) with a wavy surface and have finely toothed edges are pinkish-bronze when young, and mature to glossy green. Five-petalled, fragrant yellow flowers appear in spring (3 cm diameter) which drop off as the berry-like, spherical glossy green fruit develops attached to each of five red sepals. Fruit ripens from green to black (Nov-Jan), with each fruit containing one oval green seed.

Why is it weedy?

Competes with native plants for space, sunlight, water and nutrients, and produces abundant fruit.

How does it spread?

Seeds are spread by birds.

What damage does it do?

Colonises areas quickly and develops dense shrub cover that shades out small native plants.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Forests, shrubland and riparian vegetation in warmer coastal districts.

What can I do to get rid of it?

Contact your regional council to determine the status of this species and responsibility for control and/or advice on control.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Seed viability is relatively short (up to 1 year).



www.weedbusters.org.nz



Photo: Trevor James



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