

Orange cestrum

Cestrum aurantiacum

Family

Solanaceae (nightshade)

Where is it originally from?

Temperate and tropics of Americas

What does it look like?

Smelly shrub (<2 m) with erect, hairless stems that become woody. Leaves (4-15 x 2-7 cm) are hairless and smell strongly when bruised. Orange, scentless, tubular flowers (20-25 mm) with petal margins bent backwards appear Nov-July and are followed by clusters of white berries (15 x 20 mm).

Are there any similar species?

C. elegans, *C. fasciculatum*, *C. nocturnum*, *C. parqui*. Many native shrub species, eg. mahoe.

Why is it weedy?

Moderate to high shade tolerance. Grows in fertile soils, damp, hot or cold. Forms dense, shady masses, and produces many long-lived and widely-dispersed seeds. Poisonous, not grazed.

How does it spread?

Birds, also in water during flooding, soil movement, and dumping of greenwaste.

What damage does it do?

Forms dense stands in forest understory, preventing native species from establishing. Poisonous berries and rotting vegetation may affect native fauna.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Disturbed and open forest and margins, streamsides, and shrublands, potentially throughout NZ.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Pull out small plants (all year round): leave to mulch.
2. Cut trunk and paint stump (all year round): cut trunk near to the ground, and swab freshly cut stump with a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (100ml/L) or triclopyr 600g/L (100ml/L).
3. Overall spray (spring-summer): triclopyr 600g/L (30ml/10L).

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Hard to distinguish from many native species (apart from foetid smell), best controlled when in flower. Wear gloves when handling, exclude stock at all times. Replant bared sites to minimise regrowth. Check for seedlings 6-monthly.



www.weedbusters.org.nz



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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