

# Rice-paper plant

*Tetrapanax papyrifer*

## Family

Araliaceae (ivy)

## Also known as

*Aralia papyifera*, *Fatsia papyifera*

## Where is it originally from?

South China, Taiwan

## What does it look like?

An evergreen, rounded shrub or small tree (<8 m tall). Stems are densely covered in hairs when young, becoming more or less hairless with prominent leaf scars when older. Leaves are large and rounded heart-shaped, with toothed margins and (3-12) deep lobes (indented 1/3-2/3 of leaf radius). They are densely hairy on both surfaces when young, becoming more or less hairless above when mature, and are held on long leaf stalks (10-50 cm). Tiny white flowers (Autumn) are held in white, woolly, ball-like clusters on a large, branched stem that extends beyond the foliage, and are followed by clusters of spherical black berries (3 mm diameter).

## Are there any similar species?

*Fatsia*, *Pseudopanax* and *Schefflera* species are similar.

## Why is it weedy?

Tolerates part shade. Vigorous growth rate. Grows into thickets by suckering.

## How does it spread?

Spreads by suckers up to 2 m long.

## What damage does it do?

Can shade out native plants. Contact with foliage can cause skin rash.

## Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Disturbed forest and shrubland, forest margins, stream banks, urban areas, roadsides and wasteplaces.

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

Dig out isolated plants or small patches, and remove root system when soil soft.

## What can I do to stop it coming back?

Monitor the site and treat any regrowth. Plant a cover of native trees or shrubs to produce shade.



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



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



Photo: Trevor James



Photo: Trevor James