

Snow poppy

Eomecon chionantha

Family

Papavaraceae (poppy)

Also known as

Poppy of the dawn, Chinese bloodroot, Chinese woodland poppy, dawn poppy

Where is it originally from?

China

What does it look like?

Low-growing herbaceous perennial developing from long underground rhizomes. Small, oval, leathery leaves have scalloped edges, and stems ooze orange sap if crushed or broken. Long flower stems support pure white, four-petalled flowers (3-4cm across) with bright golden stamens.

Why is it weedy?

Shade-tolerant and smothers other low growing vegetation and its dense network of underground rhizomes makes it very hard to control. Has recently gone wild in New Zealand and has begun spreading into the bush. Dense net of underground rhizomes makes snow poppy very difficult to control. It is mainly spread through garden dumping, with new plants forming from fragments of stem or roots, and possibly by seed also.

How does it spread?

Garden dumping, vegetative spreading, possibly by seed.

What damage does it do?

Extremely invasive, smothering small native plants under a dense carpet of leaves and inhibiting germination of native plants.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Thrives in shady, well drained situations.

What can I do to get rid of it?

Dig out all rhizomes (all year round): put the soil through a sieve ensuring that no root fragments are left in the soil. Dispose of all plant material at nearest refuse transfer station.



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Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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