

Himalayan honeysuckle

Leycesteria formosa

Family Caprifoliaceae



Identification

- Multi-stemmed, perennial shrub up to 2 m tall.
- Heart-shaped leaves are attached opposite each other along the stem.
- Hanging spikes of white flowers are produced.
- Flowers are surrounded by reddish-purple bracts (modified leaves).
- Flowering occurs from December to May.
- Berries are brownish-purple in colour.



Himalayan honeysuckle. Photo A. Paltridge (DOC).



Himalayan honeysuckle berries. Photo: A. Paltridge (DOC).

Where is it found?

Himalayan honeysuckle can be found growing in damp habitats along road-sides and river banks, in scrubland, exotic forests and forest margins.

Why is it a problem?

Himalayan honeysuckle quickly colonises light-wells and gaps in vegetation. Here it can form dense thickets, potentially replacing existing native vegetation that is also starting to colonise the same sites. The berries are also spread by birds to places further afield.

Status

Himalayan honeysuckle is identified as a 'restricted pest' in the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Strategy 2005-2015. This means it is banned from sale, propagation and distribution within the Canterbury region.

Control

Small plants can be dug out and disposed of at an appropriate landfill.

The stems can also be cut and an appropriate chemical applied to the cut surface to prevent the stump from re-sprouting. Contact your local gardening centre, agri-chemical supplier or the current agri-chemical manual for chemical advice. When using herbicides always use in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and ensure no herbicide comes into contact with other plants, the soil or waterways.



Himalayan honeysuckle flowering. Photo: C. Howell (DOC).