

WEED FILE: JAPANESE HONEYSUCKLE

August 2020



DESCRIPTION

Japanese Honeysuckle – *Lonicera japonica*

Originally from Eastern Asia and Japan, Japanese honeysuckle is an invasive climbing weed that grows quickly and forms a thick mat that prevents seedlings below from growing. It was originally introduced for use as hedges but it spread quickly into areas it wasn't wanted. It is listed on the National Pest Plant Accord so check with your local council.

It is a sweet-smelling evergreen (or in colder areas a partial evergreen) perennial climber. The leaf shape changes with leaves in early spring being wavy or lobed, but summer leaves are soft rounded oval leaves. It is quite unusual in that it is possible for both leaf types to be on the plant at the same time, as shown in the photo. Leaves are up to 6cm wide and 12cm long.

Stems are hairy and a purplish colour and a wiry and very tough.

Flowers are usually a white or pale yellow about 4cm long with tubular lips, and a sweet smell. Flowers can usually be seen from September to May.

The fruit are 5-7mm, glossy black berries which are easily spread by possums and birds.

HABITAT & DISTRIBUTION

Commonly found on fences, trees, hedges, forest margins or clearings and on banks.

It is common throughout the North Island and especially in and around Auckland. Although found in the South Island it is less common the further south you go.

MANUAL CONTROL

Dig out small areas any time of the year. Make sure you dispose of roots and stems at a refuse transfer station or you can burn these or even bury deeply.

HERBICIDE CONTROL

Cut & Swab

Cut and paint stump within 10-15 minutes of cutting with any of the following:

- **Triclo** 100ml/L
- **GrassMate** – 200ml/L
- **MSF600** – 5g/L

Vial Method

Auckland council have this as a recommendation for ground infestations. Pull up all stems if possible and dispose of as per manual control above. Treat the remainder by placing the cut vine ends in vials or containers 5-10 meters apart with each vial containing:

- **MSF600** 1g per 20ml water.

Move the vials every month until completely eradicated.

Cut & Spray

Cut large vines at head height and spray below this during summer through until autumn using:

- **MSF600** – 5g/10L plus Superwetter 10ml/10L.
- **GrassMate** – 60ml/10L plus Superwetter 10ml/10L.

Spot Spraying

Spraying dense stands is the least effective method but is good for killing regrowth if other methods have been used initially. For spot spraying use:

- **Cobber** at 125ml/10L Superwetter 20ml/10L.
- **MSF600** – 5g/10L plus Superwetter 10ml/10L.

