

Darwin's barberry

Berberis darwinii

Notify Council

We would like to know if you've come across any Darwin's barberry in the wild. Please report any sightings to Environment Southland.

What does it look like?

Darwin's barberry is a spiny green shrub that grows up to 4m tall. The leaves are a dark glossy green and stiff with 3-5 spiny points. Hanging clusters (seven centimetres long) of deep orange-yellow flowers appear from July to February followed by oval purplish-black berries (5-7mm diameter) with a bluish-white surface.

Why is it a problem?

This long-lived plant tolerates moderate to cold temperatures, damp to dry conditions, high wind, salt, shade, damage, grazing (not browsed), and a range of soils. Birds and possibly possums eat the berries and subsequently spread the seeds. Berries are also occasionally spread by soil and water movement.

It is capable of invading pasture, disturbed forest, shrubland, tussockland, along roadsides and other sparsely vegetated sites. The plant forms dense colonies that replace existing vegetation and prevent the establishment of desirable plants. Darwin's barberry will also establish under canopy in forest and shrubland. It can grow more rapidly than native species when suitable conditions arise, allowing it to dominate sites where it establishes.



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Control methods

Physical control:

- Grub out (all year round). Leave on site to rot down.

Chemical control:

- Cut and Paste (all year round): Cut trunk as close to ground as possible, leaving no more than 100mm above ground. Paste stump and cut trunk with glyphosate (200ml/L) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/L) or picloram gel or a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (100ml/L) or triclopyr 600 EC (200ml/L).
- Drill & Fill: (Spring-Autumn): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (1g/100mm stem diameter). Make 1 cut or hole every 100 mm around the trunk and saturate each cut or hole with undiluted glyphosate (10ml) or 2,4-D ester (20ml). Or,
- Spray (spring-autumn): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/10L) or a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (25ml/10L).

CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and safety requirements are followed.

Related links

New Zealand Plant Conservation Network http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.aspx?ID=3509

Weedbusters <https://www.weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/weed-list/darwins-barberry/>

Auckland Council <http://pestplants.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plant-search/Berdar>

Summary of rules

No person can sell, propagate, breed, distribute or otherwise spread any Darwin's barberry.

For full rules please see Sections 52 and 53 of the [Biosecurity Act 1993](#).

Within the Darwin's barberry Fiordland and Rakiura National Park Buffers (see map) Environment Southland can direct you to control all Darwin's barberry on land you own or occupy.

Environment Southland will have undertaken initial control prior to a direction being given.

Stewart Island/Rakiura Only: Owners/Occupiers are expected to co-operate with all organised control programmes. Alternative arrangements can be agreed individually with Environment Southland.

For full rules please see the [Southland Regional Pest Management Plan](#) (Rule 10).

Management programme

Progressive containment
Unwanted organism
National Pest Plant Accord

Request info

<https://eservices.es.govt.nz/online-services/new/BiosecurityRFS/step/1?Subject=PlantPests&Species=71>

Report this Pest/Weed

<https://eservices.es.govt.nz/online-services/new/BiosecurityIncident/step/1?Subject=PlantPests&Species=71>