

African club moss

Selaginella kraussiana

What does it look like?

Native to South Africa, African club moss is a delicate groundcover with long, fine roots that break off easily. Slender, irregularly branched stems are rooted at small nodes. Leaves (2-4mm) are in opposite rows. Tolerates a range of climates, and light to deep shade, but requires damp to wet soils.

Why is it a problem?

African club moss is found throughout the North Island, and in much of the South Island. It has been eradicated on the Kermadec Islands.

The species disperses widely and quickly, forming a carpet-like mat on the forest floor and along forest margins. Although easy to remove by hand, the smallest of fragments left behind can still be enough to start a new population.

Suppression of native regeneration leads to a more open understorey with less second generation trees present and increased light levels. As light gaps develop over time and there are no younger trees to replace the canopy layer, pest plants can establish in these areas of high light, with serious impacts on overall forest structure.



Control Methods

Physical control

Where possible, dig it out to remove all fragments. Follow up to check for regrowth. Burn, bury deeply or take to landfill. Or,

Cover with light impenetrable material (i.e. black plastic/polythene - which can be cleaned and recycled) or weedmat (weighted down) for three to six months.

Herbicide control

Spray with glyphosate (360g/L active ingredient) at 20ml/L of water. Add organosilicone penetrant (or equivalent) if the product does not already contain one. Follow up every 3 months. Or,

Spray with metsulfuron-methyl (600g/kg active ingredient) at 3g/L + glyphosate at 100ml/L + organosilicone penetrant at 2ml/L of water. Take care to avoid desirable plants. Do not apply near water bodies or wetlands.

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

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Related Links

Ministry for Primary Industries <http://apps.mpi.govt.nz/applications/nzpests-view/Article/560/Selaginella>

New Zealand Plant Conservation Network http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.aspx?ID=2668

NZ Flora <http://www.nzflora.info/factsheet/Taxon/Selaginella-kraussiana.html>

Weedbusters <https://www.weedbusters.org.nz/what-are-weeds/weed-list/african-club-moss/>

Selaginellaceae guide <https://datastore.landcareresearch.co.nz/dataset/nzflora-brownsey-perrie-2018-selaginellaceae/resource/67299c97-d336-45ac-bd72-c5edc4ff89fa>

NPPA <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity/how-to-find-report-and-prevent-pests-and-diseases/partnerships-programmes-and-accords/national-pest-plant-accord-for-preventing-the-sale-of-invasive-weeds-in-nz/>

Rules

Under Section 52 and 53 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 no person can sell, propagate, breed, distribute or otherwise spread any pest in a Pest Management Plan, or any unwanted organism. Not complying with Section 52 or 53 is an offence under the Act, and may result in penalties noted in Section 157(1).

The National Pest Plant Accord is designed to prevent the sale, distribution and propagation of a set list of pest plants (the Accord list) within New Zealand. If allowed to spread further, these pest plants could seriously damage the New Zealand economy and environment.