

Tuber ladder fern

Nephrolepis cordifolia

What does it look like?

Terrestrial or epiphytic fern which grows to 1m, with small, erect, scaly rhizomes which produce many long runners and round, 1-3 cm hairy potato-like tubers. Fronds (40-100 x 5-8cm) are erect or arching, with long, serrated, and divided leaflets.

Why is it a problem?

Tuber ladder fern is widespread in the North Island and also present in the top western part of the South Island. Spreads by spores, runners and tubers and forms dense, long-lived patches which are often large. Grows in the damp or dry, on the ground or in trees, in the open or the shade, in most soil types and in hot to moderately cool temperatures.

Crowds out groundcovers, shrubs and other ferns and can contribute to streamside erosion.



Control Methods

Physical control

Hand pull or dig out small infestations. Dispose of tubers and runners at landfill, burn or bury.

Herbicide control

Foliar spray with metsulfuron-methyl (600g/kg active ingredient) at 0.5g/L of water, or, with metsulfuron-methyl (600g/kg active ingredient) at 0.1g/L of water plus glyphosate (360g/L active ingredient) at 10ml/L of water.

Leave sprayed sites 3-4 months to allow herbicide to translocate to tubers before clearing or replanting.

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

Related Links

Ministry for Primary Industries <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/pests/tuber-ladder-fern>

New Zealand Plant Conservation Network http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.aspx?ID=3230

NZ Flora <http://www.nzflora.info/factsheet/Taxon/Nephrolepis-cordifolia.html>

Weedbusters <https://www.weedbusters.org.nz/>

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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.