



# TRADESCANTIA BIOCONTROL

*Tradescantia fluminensis*



## Project overview

*Tradescantia* is native to South America. It was brought to New Zealand as an ornamental plant, but it has become a major weed throughout the North Island and parts of the South Island. It forms dense mats in forest margins, forest clearings, and stream margins, smothering tree and shrub seedlings and low-growing native plants.

Four biocontrol agents from Brazil have been released to attack *tradescantia*. Three are beetles: the *tradescantia* leaf beetle (*Neolema ogloblini*) damages the foliage, the *tradescantia* stem beetle (*Lema basicostata*) attacks the stems, and the *tradescantia* tip beetle (*Neolema abbreviata*) attacks the growing tips. All three beetles have established and are showing early promise. The beetles cause extensive damage to *tradescantia* in their native range, and it is hoped they will do the same here.

A yellow leaf spot fungus (*Kordyana brasiliensis*) has also been released in New Zealand in 2018 and is establishing well in damp areas. The fungus is expected to complement the beetles, especially since it will likely thrive at sites that flood regularly.

### For further information contact:

Quentin Paynter  
Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research  
Private Bag 92170  
Auckland Mail Centre  
Auckland 1142  
NEW ZEALAND  
Email: [paynterq@landcareresearch.co.nz](mailto:paynterq@landcareresearch.co.nz)  
Ph (09) 574 4123



From top to bottom: *tradescantia* leaf beetle, *tradescantia* stem beetle, *tradescantia* tip beetle and *tradescantia* yellow spot fungus

