

# Old Man's Beard

(*Clematis vitalba*)

## Is Old Man's Beard on your property?

Old man's beard is included in Horizon's Regional Plant Pest Management Strategy as a 'containment' plant. The areas where it has become a problem are recorded in the strategy and the aim is to stop them spreading further. Outside the containment areas Horizons will undertake control measures to eradicate old man's beard wherever it appears. If you see any sites of infestation, please contact us on freephone 0508 800 800.



Photograph by: Charmaine Marinkovich

## Identification

A deciduous, climbing layering vine to 20 m tall. Stems long and woody with 6 prominent ribs and pale easily-peeled bark. Opposite leaves consist of five widely-spaced, thin, papery leaflets, that are sparsely hairy and entire or lightly toothed. Creamy white fragrant flowers 2-3 cm in diameter appear December- May. Seeds are grey, hairy, 2-3 cm long with distinctive white plumes 3-4 cm long in dense fluffy clusters persisting over winter. *C.flammula* is very similar.

## Weedy characteristics

Rapid growth rate and ability to dominate and choke a plant canopy of any height. Forms dense, permanent masses, with heavily layered stems. Tolerant to cold, shade, damp, wind, salt and most soil types. Produces many long-lived seeds and is hard to kill. Flowers need frost to set seed.

## Methods of dispersal

Seeds are wind or water borne. Can also spread via dumped vegetation and stem layering.

## Impact on indigenous plants

Smothers and kills plants of all sizes. Prevents regeneration and moves readily into established forests.

## Typical habitats

Disturbed and open forests and forest margins, shrublands, riversides, cliffs, bush tracks, roadsides, hedgerows and vacant land.

## Control

1. Introduce biological control agents wherever weed is common.
2. Cut stems at 1 m and ground level to prevent stump from resprouting and aerial roots from attaching. Swab stump with Escort 5 g/L , Tordon BK 10%, Vigilant or Banvine 20%. Leave stems in air to die. Dispose of cut segments. All year round.
3. For ground infestations, spray with glyphosate 2%. or Versatill prior to flowering at label rates. Pull any seedling plants. All year round.

## Site management

Do not leave stems to mulch. Dispose of them by burning, soaking in herbicide or burying deeply. Replant bared areas promptly and check for seedlings at least 6-monthly.

## Species recovery

Stumps resprout very quickly and cut stems root at nodes.

**For more information freephone 0508 800 800.**

