

Cathedral bells

Cobaea scandens

Family Cobaeaceae



Identification

- Vigorous evergreen vine
- Oval leaves are dark green above and whitish below
- Twinning purplish stems can grow up to 10 m long
- Large bell-shaped flowers appear from December to May
- Flowers are green at first but turn deep purple with age
- Flowers develop into large oval fruit which contain winged seeds



Cathedral bells flower. Photo: DOC (C. Howell).



Cathedral bells. Photo: C. Ogle.

Where is it found?

Cathedral bells can be found growing in forest, forest margins, open areas, along riverbanks, roadsides, in scrub and in private gardens.

To date, cathedral bells has not been found growing wild in Canterbury.

Why is it a problem?

Cathedral bells is a fast-growing species that grows to the canopy. Here it forms a dense mass where it can smother the vegetation beneath it and suppress the growth of native seedlings. The winged seeds are easily transported to new sites by wind, water and soil movement. Cut stumps and dumped vegetation can also re-sprout very quickly.

Status

Cathedral bells is a declared unwanted organism under the Biosecurity Act 1993, which makes it illegal to knowingly release, spread, display or sell, breed, propagate or otherwise distribute plants or parts of plants.

Sightings

We are interested to know if cathedral bells is growing in the Canterbury region. If you have seen this plant, please contact the Potential Pest Line on (03) 363 9380 to report your sighting.



Cathedral bells flower and fruits. Photo: DOC (C. Howell).