

# German ivy

*Senecio mikanioides*

Family Asteraceae



## Identification

- Perennial scrambling or climbing vine.
- Clusters of yellow, daisy-like flowers appear from May to October.
- The thin, green leaves (up to 10 cm long by 10 cm wide) are hairless and clammy to touch.
- Each ivy-like leaf has 3–7 lobes.
- Ear-shaped appendages can be found at the base of the leaf stalks.
- Fluffy seeds produced.



German ivy flowering. Photo: Plant Protection Society.



Top left—English ivy. Photo: A. Paltridge (DOC). Bottom left—German ivy. Photo: Plant Protection Society. Right—Cape ivy. Photo: A. Paltridge (DOC).

## Similar species

German ivy looks similar to Cape ivy (*Senecio angulatus*) and English ivy (*Hedera helix*). The photos above show the different leaf shapes for the three species.

## Control

German ivy is easier to control when it is highly visible, flowering, and no seed has been produced. Small plants can be pulled out ensuring the roots are dug out and disposed of appropriately. Alternatively stems can be cut below waist height and sprayed below this point with an appropriate herbicide. Contact your local gardening centre, agri-chemical supplier or the current agri-chemical manual, for chemical advice. When using herbicides always use in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and ensure no herbicide comes into contact with other plants, the soil or waterways.

## Where is it found?

German ivy prefers to grow in disturbed, open sites although it is semi-tolerant of shady conditions. It can be found in coastal areas, lowland forest margins, shrublands, roadsides, quarries, wasteland and private gardens.

## Why is it a problem?

German ivy is a fast growing species that can grow up to sub-canopy levels. Here it smothers and shades out shrubs and small trees. It can also spread over forest floor areas, preventing the regeneration of native seedlings.

## Status

German ivy is a 'restricted pest' under the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Strategy 2005–2015. This means that it is illegal to sell, propagate or distribute this plant throughout Canterbury.



German ivy invading a forest margin. Photo: G. Bradfield (ECan).