

The big, the bad and the helpful!

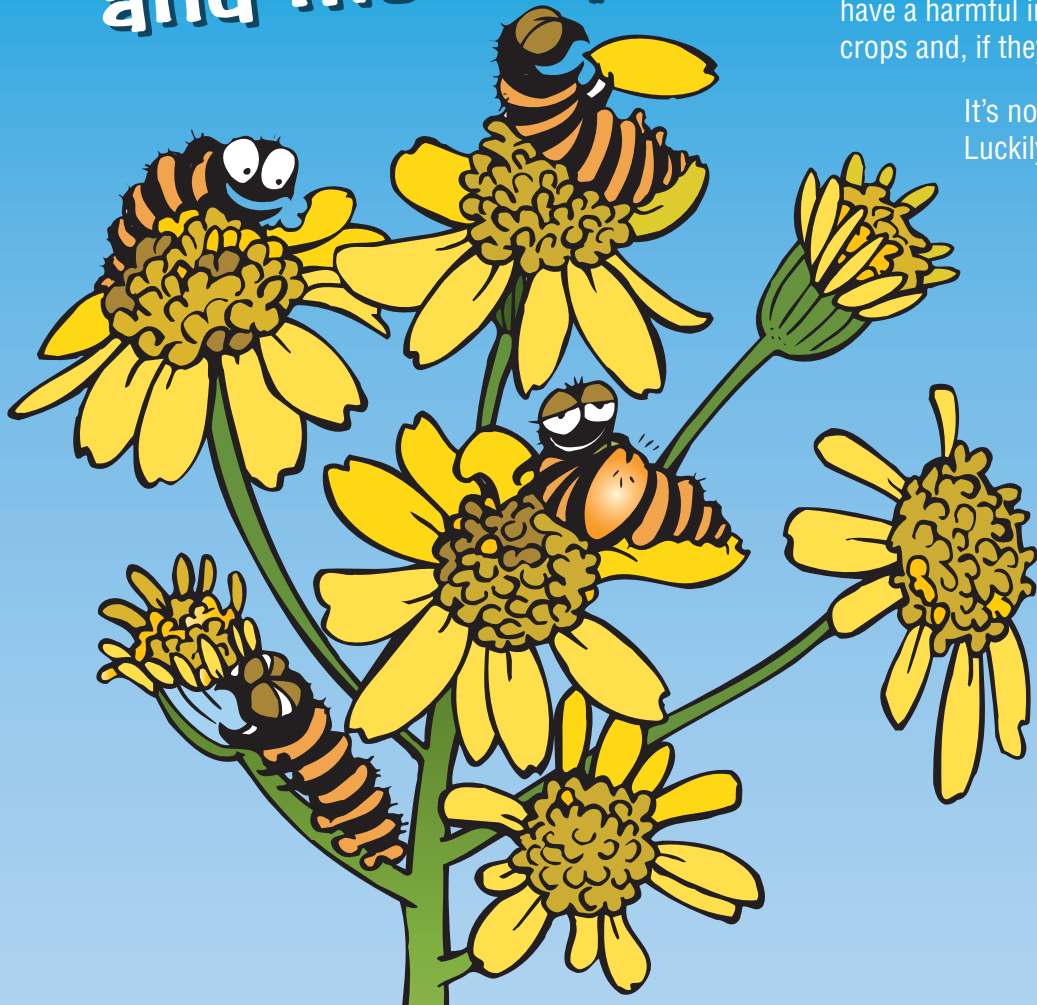
kids

Living Here



In New Zealand, there are many plants growing where they shouldn't be. These 'weeds' can have a harmful impact on people and other animals, can take over special native plants and crops and, if they grow in water, can interfere with boating, fishing and other water activities.

It's not always easy to control these weeds and it's sometimes very expensive. Luckily we have some little insect friends who can help control those nasty weeds!



Mix and match

Let's see how good you are at matching the weed with the friendly little helper.

Leaf miner

Clue: I feed from the inside.

Cinnabar caterpillar

Clue: I can eat a whole flower in just three minutes.

Broom seed beetle

Clue: I am a small brown beetle, my babies eat the seeds.

Broom

Old man's beard

Ragwort

Take action – BE the friendly helper!

Weedbusters is a weeds programme that aims to protect New Zealand's environment from the increasing weed problem. One way they do this is by using their special mascot to spread the word.

Pretty crazy looking guy!

Your challenge is to design your own weed mascot that will help people understand the need to get rid of these harmful, unwanted plants. To add to the impact include a name and a catchy message encouraging people to take action!

The winner of each category wins a \$20 gift book voucher. Be sure to get your entry to us by the closing date of 30 October. Winners will be notified by 3 November.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Age Group (please tick one)
 5-7 years old 8-10 years old 11-13 years old

Send to:
 Mascot Competition
 Environmental Education
 Freepost 1209
 P O Box 345
 CHRISTCHURCH

Conditions: Judge's decisions are final. Entries will not be returned and will become the property of Environment Canterbury



Woody

Your weed mascot could help protect these beautiful native plants!



Get one of these books out of the library and see if you can find the native plants.

Know your NZ Trees by Lawrie Metcalf

Introducing NZ Trees by Ailina Arkins & Len Doel

Life-size Guide to Native Trees by Andrew Crowe

The answers are hidden on page 7!

Old man's beard

I am a fast growing climber. I can scramble and climb over other plants, blocking out light they need for growth and breaking branches with the weight of my vines. By killing off native plants, I destroy food supply for native species, including birds, lizards and insects. You'll find me almost everywhere, including on roadsides, river banks, gardens, and forest edges.

And the friendly little helper - Leaf miner

I am just a small little fly who can be hard to find. I lay tiny eggs inside the leaves of old man's beard. My young tunnel between the top and bottom layers of the plant. These tunnels leave tiny, squiggly burrows behind, preventing nutrients flowing through to the leaves and causing them to die.

Ragwort

You'll find me on farms all over New Zealand, but I'm not a welcome guest. I can take over grazing land, then poison the animals who dare to eat me. I can also invade important environments such as river beds and open forests. I grow quickly in most places, producing massive numbers of long-living seeds.

And the friendly little helper - Cinnabar caterpillar

I am a hungry little caterpillar who feeds on the leaves and flowers of ragwort. I can eat a whole flower in just three minutes and a bunch of us will eat a whole plant in one day! Best of all, I turn into a really pretty moth once my caterpillar duties are fulfilled. Then it's my turn to lay eggs and produce more caterpillars to feed on ragwort.

Broom

I have golden-yellow flowers and oblong green pods that explode and spread seeds everywhere. Farmers really don't like me. I invade forests by competing with young trees. I am a particular problem in tussock grasslands and unique braided rivers where I destroy the homes of water birds.

And the friendly little helper - Broom seed beetle

I like to feed on the pollen of many flower species, but this is not harmful to broom. My babies do the real damage by eating the seeds in the pods during the warmer months. No seeds, no broom!