

Chinese windmill palm

Trachycarpus fortunei



Identification

- Medium-sized palm up to 15 m tall
- Trunk rough, up to 35 cm thick and covered in fibres
- Fan-shaped leaves up to 2 m long, with a 1 m long toothed stalk
- Dead leaves stay like a skirt around the trunk
- Hanging, yellow flower-spikes up to 1 m long appear in late spring to early summer
- Small, yellow to blue-black fruit ripen in autumn



Chinese windmill palm Photo: M. von Tippelskirch (ECan)



Chinese windmill palm toothed leaf stalk Photo: M. von Tippelskirch (ECan)

Where is it found?

In gardens, disturbed sites, margins of streams and rivers, regenerating forest and coastal sites. It has spread rapidly in some parts of the North Island and is starting to spread from gardens in Canterbury.

Why is it a problem?

Chinese windmill palm is one of the hardiest and most adaptable palms in the world. It is fast growing, tolerant of frost, wind, shade and salt, and produces masses of seeds which are dispersed by birds and gravity. It can invade native plant communities.

Control

Pull out small plants and dispose of them in a landfill. Cut bigger plants near ground level and paint stumps with an appropriate herbicide. Use all herbicides in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and ensure no herbicide comes into contact with other plants, the soil or waterways. After initial control, monitor the site for re-growth for at least two years.

For more information on Chinese windmill palm, refer to the Weedbusters website (www.weedbusters.co.nz).



Chinese windmill palm in flower Photo: C. Howell (DOC)