

# Lodgepole pine

(also known as contorta pine)

*Pinus contorta*



## Identification

- Short needles in pairs; needles are usually twisted
- Small cones with a sharp spike on each cone segment
- Old empty cones remain attached to branches
- Cones can be seen on trees as young as six years old



Lodgepole pine cone showing distinct spines Photo: N. Ledgard

## Status

Lodgepole pine has been banned from sale, propagation or distribution in New Zealand.

## Control

Remove seed-producing trees and isolated scattered plants first. Pull small seedlings out by the roots. Cut bigger trees near ground level and either apply herbicide to the cut stump or ensure all green needles are removed. After initial control, follow-up checking of the area for new re-growth will be required for several years. For more information about lodgepole pine, other wilding conifers and how to control them, see: [www.wildingconifers.org.nz](http://www.wildingconifers.org.nz).

Use all herbicides in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and ensure no herbicide comes into contact with other plants, the soil or waterways.



Young lodgepole pine Photo: M. Parker

## Where is it found?

In old plantations, shrubland, tussock grassland, herbfields, scree and regenerating forest.

## Why is it a problem?

Lodgepole pine is one of the most prolific 'wilding conifers' which are rapidly invading the high country in certain locations. It is a very frost-hardy and drought-tolerant tree, producing lots of light, wind-dispersed seeds at an early age. It can invade open forest, native sub-alpine grassland, shrub, and herb communities—even above the native tree line. In the long-term, lodgepole pine may displace these communities entirely. Dense stands also increase fire risk.

## Similar species

Scots (*Pinus sylvestris*), and mountain pine (*P. mugo*) look similar but are lacking cones with spikes.



Lodgepole pine infestation Photo: E. Cieraad