

Mexican daisy

Erigeron karvinskianus



Identification

- Sprawling perennial daisy that can grow to 40 cm tall
- White-purplish/white or pink daisy-like flowers 15-25 mm in diameter with a central yellow disc
- Flowers appear September to May, followed by masses of fluffy seeds
- Long thin stems and fibrous roots
- Small narrow leaves are fragrant when crushed



Mexican daisy Photo S. Crump (DOC)



Mexican daisy Photo: S. Crump (DOC)

Where is it found?

Mexican daisy has escaped home gardens to invade forest margins, streamsides, banks, roadsides, shrubland and waste places. It has now been declared an 'unwanted organism' which means it is illegal to sell, propagate or distribute Mexican daisy under the Biosecurity Act 1993 (for more information on unwanted organisms visit www.maf.govt.nz).

Why is it a problem?

Mexican daisy forms dense mats of groundcover which can smother and suppress native vegetation. It can survive in a range of habitats and also tolerates moderate shade to full sun. The tiny seed is spread long distances via wind and potentially contaminated topsoil and potting mix. In Canterbury it is a particular threat to small native plants growing in coastal areas and on rocky outcrops.

Control

Control new infestations promptly. Hand pull or dig out small plants in small areas. Follow up control on a monthly basis. Remove all roots and try to avoid spreading any seeds during this process. Be careful of this method with larger sites as soil disturbance can encourage seed germination and invasion of other weeds. Material containing seeds or roots should be bagged and disposed of at a landfill.

A range of herbicides are suitable for controlling Mexican daisy.

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



Mexican daisy invading a forest edge Photo: S. Crump (DOC)