

Coltsfoot

Tussilago farfara

Family Asteraceae



Identification

- Perennial, mat-forming herb which grows up to 20 cm high.
- Single daisy-like flowers appear at the top of the flower-stalk before the leaves begin to grow in spring.
- The large, leathery leaves can occasionally have a spider web appearance. Leaves have finely-toothed leaf edges.
- Upper leaf surface is green and smooth. Lower leaf surface is grayish-white with woolly hairs.
- Small brown fruit are produced, attached to a dandelion-like parachute of hairs.



Coltsfoot infestation. Photo: Environment Canterbury

Status

Coltsfoot has been declared an unwanted organism under the Biosecurity Act, 1993 which makes it illegal to knowingly release, spread, display or sell, breed, propagate or otherwise distribute plants or part thereof.

Coltsfoot is a 'Total Control' plant under the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Strategy (2005-2015). For more information, visit www.ecan.govt.nz.

Have you seen it?

If you think you have found coltsfoot, please contact Environment Canterbury or the Potential Pest Hotline on (03) 363 9380 **immediately**.

Environment Canterbury staff will carry out all control work for coltsfoot at Environment Canterbury's cost.



Coltsfoot. Photo: Environment Canterbury

Where is it found?

Coltsfoot grows in heavy soils, stream margins and damp loose gravel areas. The plant dies back during winter. It is extremely rare in New Zealand, found in the Arthurs Pass area and the Eyre River, Oxford.

Why is it a problem?

Coltsfoot is invasive and there is the potential for plant fragments to enter and clog small waterways. The plants can also invade irrigated pasture.

Coltsfoot spreads mainly via underground rhizomes (underground stems) or rhizome fragments. It can also be spread by wind-blown seed.



Coltsfoot growing along a waterway. Photo: Environment Canterbury