

Biosecurity Bites

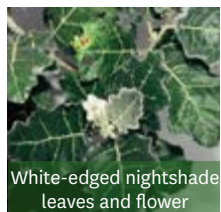
Central Issue

AUTUMN 2017

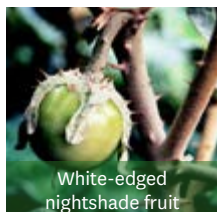
Regional Pest Management Plan review update

The Regional Pest Management Plan is currently under review. A discussion document was released in December 2016. Since then we've been working with partners and communities to shape proposed rules and content. It's important that we have the right rules and tools in place to manage both existing legacy pests and emerging pests. The plan needs to work for people and also manage pests well in the long term. We are looking to notify the proposed plan for submissions in the first half of 2017.

Have you seen White-edged Nightshade?



White-edged nightshade leaves and flower



White-edged nightshade fruit

This nasty prickly plant can form dense thickets, excluding stock and potentially displacing pasture and native species. A threat to marginal coastal areas, white-edged nightshade is found at a few sites on Banks Peninsula that are checked and controlled annually by the Biosecurity team. Birds disperse its seed, so white-edged nightshade can establish some distance from the parent plant.

Please call your local Biosecurity team if you have seen this plant.

Managing Velvetleaf

Last year, the invasive weed velvetleaf was found in fodder beet seed imported from Europe. In Canterbury over 500 farms purchased one of the six contaminated seed lines. This year Environment Canterbury is supporting the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) to help affected farmers prepare farm biosecurity plans to manage velvetleaf and prevent further spread. To stop the spread of velvetleaf and other pests to and from your property, make sure you are notified when people intend to enter your property (free signage is available from Environment Canterbury), and implement hygiene protocols such as checking and cleaning machines and vehicles.

If you have found velvetleaf, contact MPI on 0800 80 99 66 or go to <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/media-releases/velvetleaf-weed-hunt-goes-national/>



Velvetleaf seed pods

What is the Biosecurity team up to?

The Central team has been busy over summer and moving into autumn with work on our total control pests such as white-edged nightshade and bur daisy. Purple loosestrife sites have also been checked. These plants are all of limited distribution and sites are monitored and controlled by the team. The old man's beard inspection programme is well underway, with this work focused on protecting high-value areas. The team has been busy in Governors Bay and Akaroa with the aim of having control work completed before seed set in early April.

Autumn sees us working on our nassella search programme with an emphasis on the West Melton area.

We will also be moving into our gorse and broom compliance programme, so if you require any information on control options please contact your Biosecurity team.

Have you seen this plant?



YBG seed head

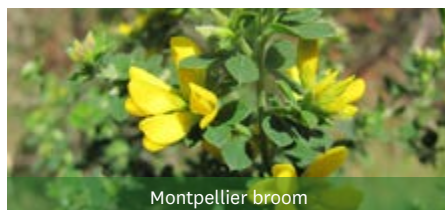
Yellow bristle grass (YBG) was recently identified at two sites in North Canterbury and has been found at a number of sites around Ashburton. YBG is an annual seeding plant that spreads rapidly through pasture, reducing its quality and utilisation. It has spread very quickly in the North Island, and is now impacting significantly on dairy production. If allowed to spread in Canterbury, the economic impacts could be devastating. Seeds can be spread by animals, water, soil movement and as contaminants of hay and maize. To reduce the risk of YBG spreading, landowners should practise good on-farm biosecurity. Be on the lookout for this invasive grass on your property and adjacent roadsides when seed heads emerge in January and February.

Wilding Conifer Control *Thinking about autumn gorse and broom control?*

In June 2016 the Minister of Finance announced that \$16 million would be provided over 4 years to help with the costs of implementing a national programme for managing wilding conifers. This contribution supplements the current annual spend of \$11 million from agencies and landholders. Since then, several agencies and others have worked together to prepare a national work programme, prepared and costed detailed operational plans, and considered the logistics of delivering a much expanded control programme.

Regional councils in the affected regions are taking on the role of “banker” on behalf of the Crown.

The Wilding Conifer Governance Group has allocated \$5,022,188 of Crown funding to the 2016/17 national conifer control programme, of which \$2.9 million has been allocated to Canterbury. Six control programmes have been implemented in the region with a total budget of just under \$4 million including Crown funding. All projects are well under way, with control work almost complete on the Godley project. Two of the larger projects will be completed by the end of June. The governance group is keen to see additional projects proposed that align with the national prioritisation.



The priorities for your control programme should be:

- Clear boundaries of all gorse and broom at least 10 metres back (where those boundaries are clear or being cleared of gorse and broom)
- Focus on clearing scattered plants and small patches. These are the biggest threat to your property
- Plan and work methodically across the property, starting with the least infested areas and working back towards block infestations
- Always control plants before they set seed to prevent more seed being added to the seed bank
- Trim boundary hedges (top and both sides) each year after flowering but before they set seed.

For advice on control of gorse and broom on your property, please contact your local Biosecurity team.

Less paperwork – rabbit and wallaby control now easier for landowners



An Environment Canterbury consent is no longer required for laying poison bait for vertebrate pest control; it is now a “permitted activity” under the Land & Water Regional Plan provided two conditions are met (see below). This relates to 1080 impregnated pellets, carrots or oats for baiting rabbits and wallaby.

Rule 5.20 *The discharge of a vertebrate toxic agent onto or into land, including the bed of a lake or river, in circumstances where a contaminant may enter water, or into water is a permitted activity, provided the following conditions are met:*

1. *The substance is approved under the Hazardous Substances & New Organisms Act 1996 and the use and discharge of the substance is in accordance with all conditions of the approval; and*

2. *The discharge is not within a Group 1 or community drinking-water Protection Zone as set out in Schedule 1.*

Rule 5.21 *The discharge of a vertebrate toxic agent onto or into land, including the bed of a lake or river, in circumstances where a contaminant may enter water, or into water, that does not meet one or both of the conditions in Rule 5.20 is a discretionary activity.*

A discretionary activity **requires** a consent.

An operator with a Controlled Substance licence is required for poison application and in many cases a Medical Officer of Health permit is required, depending on toxin type and application method.

Always check first.

Who do I call?

For all pest enquiries, please contact the Central Biosecurity team via 0800 324 636 or email biosecurity@ecan.govt.nz