

Biosecurity Bites

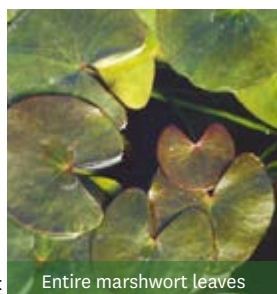
Northern Issue

AUTUMN 2017

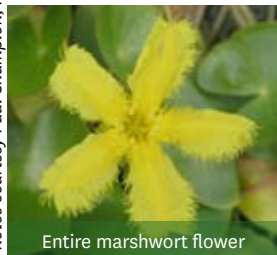
Regional Pest Management Plan review update

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 these plants?



Entire marshwort leaves



Entire marshwort flower

Entire marshwort is a heart-shaped freshwater perennial with bright green leaves that float on the surface and small yellow flowers with 5 distinct petals that sit on stalks above the water. This invasive aquatic pest can be found in slow-moving waterways, ponds and swamps where it forms dense mats outcompeting native species, disrupting recreational use, de-oxygenating water and harming aquatic life. Entire marshwort is found at a small number of isolated sites in Canterbury. If you see this plant, please contact your local Biosecurity team.



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.

Please report any suspected sightings to your Biosecurity team.



Velvetleaf seed pods

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/>

Environment Canterbury website updated

To find information about pests in Canterbury and more about what the Biosecurity team do, visit www.ecan.govt.nz/your-region/your-environment/our-natural-environment/pest-management/

We want to provide you with useful, good-quality information. Please let us know what you think of the website – what is missing that you would like to see available, and what is currently good/useful?

Please email your comments to biosecurity@ecan.govt.nz

What is the Biosecurity team up to?

Since Christmas the Northern team has been tackling Total Control plants (plants of limited distribution) such as saffron thistle, African feather grass, bur daisy and coltsfoot. These plants are not easily recognised by most landowners and the Biosecurity team carries out control work annually. Some additional Chilean needle grass searching has also been undertaken.

Autumn activities for the Northern team include nassella tussock monitoring, gorse and broom inspections, and old man's beard control in areas of high environmental value.

The Northern Biosecurity team can now be found at the Hurunui District Council building, 66 Carters Road, Amberley.

Less paperwork – rabbit and wallaby control now easier for landowners



Poison bait for vertebrate pest control

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 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.**

Wilding Conifer 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 areas which have benefited from the funding in 2016/17 are outlined in red.

Can we help?

The Northern Biosecurity team acknowledges the difficulties facing the farming community in parts of North Canterbury. We are aware that between the prolonged drought and the devastation caused by the earthquake, some people are under a great deal of pressure. If you would like any advice relating

to your pest control programme, we welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you. Please remember that the North Canterbury Rural Support Trust is set up to help rural individuals and their families get back on their feet. They can be contacted on 0800 787 254.

Who do I call?

For all pest enquiries, please contact the Northern Biosecurity team at Amberley on 0800 324 636 or biosecurity@ecan.govt.nz