

# CHOCOLATE VINE

*Akebia quinata*

## Management programme

Exclusion	Eradication	Progressive containment	Sustained control	Site-led
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## Impacts

Economic	Biodiversity	Soil resources	Water quantity/ quality
Human health	Social and cultural wellbeing	Amenity/recreation	Animal welfare

## Objectives

Reduce the amount of chocolate vine and limit the locations that have it within the Waikato region.

## Why is it a pest?

Chocolate vine grows very rapidly, forming a thick, tangled mat that can overwhelm and out compete desirable plants. Without something to climb up it can grow into a thick groundcover. Once established it prevents seed germination and smothers seedlings, stopping the regeneration of native plants.

Spread is most often vegetative via fragments of stem that can readily take root. Human-mediated spread can occur through mowing, soil movement and dumping of garden waste. It can also be dispersed by birds that eat the fruit, dispersing the seeds.

Chocolate vine tolerates a wide range of environmental conditions (from full sun to shade, drought and frost, and a range of soil types), although it prefers partial shade on well drained moist soils. It can establish along roadsides, in scrub, along forest margins and in hedges.

## Responsibility for control

**All occupiers within the Waikato region are responsible for the control of chocolate vine.**

- All occupiers are encouraged to report suspected sightings of chocolate vine on their properties (rule CHOC-1 of the **Waikato Regional Pest Management Plan 2022-2032**) and liaise with Waikato Regional Council in areas where control programmes are in place.
- All occupiers are responsible for controlling chocolate vine on their property (rule CHOC-2) and are encouraged to liaise with Waikato Regional Council in areas where control programmes are in place.

## Developers

- If chocolate vine is present on a property that is to be subdivided or developed, there are additional rules and requirements that apply under section 6.6 of the RPMP 2022-2032.

**Chocolate vine is banned from being sold, propagated, distributed, or included in commercial displays.**



## What does it look like?

Chocolate vine is scrambling ground cover or climbing vine to 20m tall.



## Flower

- Vanilla or chocolate-scented, chocolate-purple flowers (25mm across).
- Flowers are 2.5cm in diameter and hang in 5cm-10cm long clusters of 6-8 flowers.
- Flowers present in spring.



## Fruit/seed

- Purple coloured flattened sausage-shaped seed pods 8cm-9cm long with whitish seed pulp.
- Fruit ripens in late summer to autumn.
- Pulp contains many tiny black seeds.



## Leaves/stems

- Many slender green stems which turn brown when mature.
- Each leaf is made up of five oval leaflets (3cm-7.5cm long), combining to form a 'hand-shaped' leaf on a long stalk.
- Compound leaves are alternative along the stem.
- Leaf colour changes from green with a purplish-tinge to blue-green at maturity.

# How can I control chocolate vine?

## Physical control

- Dig out small vines and any seedlings at any time of the year, taking care to get all the roots. Dispose of in black garbage bags to a lined landfill. Do not compost or leave lying where they can take root again. Follow this up regularly until no more seedlings come up then replant with preferred species.
- For larger plants, cut the vine stems off at ground level and repeat when they regrow. Tie off hanging vines in the canopy so they cannot touch the ground and revegetate. Once growth has died back, dig out root systems and dispose of carefully to lined landfill. Repeat the process until all signs of regrowth have gone.

## Herbicide control

### Cut and paste

- Cut stems at ground level and apply immediately with glyphosate or picloram gel to both ends. This method is most suitable with large vines where the risk of damaging desirable plants is high.

### Spray application

- Overall spray application using triclopyr or triclopyr/picloram mix. You can also spray glyphosate in spring or summer spray at 300ml/15L water, or use triclopyr at 60ml/10L water plus penetrant. Totally cover the leaf surface with herbicides. This method is most suitable for larger vines where the level of risk to desirable plants is low.

## Summary of herbicides and application methods for control

Herbicide	Application
<b>Glyphosate</b>	Cut and paste treatment. Spray application.
<b>Triclopyr</b>	Spray application.
<b>Triclopyr/picloram mix</b>	Cut and paste treatment. Spray application.
<b>Picloram or glyphosate gels</b>	Cut and paste treatment.

Herbicide rules will apply. You may need to notify neighbours if spraying. The Waikato Regional Plan explains the agrichemical (herbicides) use rule in section 6.2.



## More information

### Advice

For advice and additional information on control methods, call our pest plant staff on freephone 0800 800 401.

Chemical company representatives, farm supply stores, garden centres or the Weedbusters website can also be good sources for advice.

### Publications

The following publications are available from the Waikato Regional Council. Contact us to request a copy (freephone 0800 800 401).

- National Pest Plant Accord (manual of plants banned from sale, propagation and distribution) (free)
- Plant Me Instead! (Plants to use in place of pest plants) (free)

### Web

- *Waikato Regional Pest Management Plan 2022-2032* – [waikatoregion.govt.nz/RPMP](http://waikatoregion.govt.nz/RPMP)
- *Waikato Biosecurity Strategy 2022-2032* – [waikatoregion.govt.nz/biosecurity-strategy](http://waikatoregion.govt.nz/biosecurity-strategy)