

# CLIMBING ASPARAGUS

## *Asparagus scandens*

### Why is it a pest?

Climbing asparagus is a perennial scrambling vine that can climb to approximately 6m. It's capable of smothering seedlings and saplings and shading out, strangling and ring barking larger trees. Climbing asparagus is able to grow a range of habitats and is tolerant of coastal conditions, semi-shade and drought. It invades coastal and lowland shrubland and forest, making it a serious threat to native ecosystems. Once established, climbing asparagus is very difficult to eradicate.

Climbing asparagus spreads by birds eating the berries and dispersing them and via root tubers and pieces of stem that can regrow. Illegal dumping of garden waste and the movement of contaminated soil can also spread this weed.

### How can I control climbing asparagus?

Climbing asparagus wraps itself around its hosts, making it difficult to spray without affecting other plants. Physical control may be preferable to herbicide control as it causes less damage to other plants.

#### Physical control

First, cut back the leaves and stems of the plant then dig out all roots and tubers. Tubers should be burned and totally destroyed.

#### Herbicide control

Best results are achieved from spring to early summer.

#### Cut stump treatment

- Cut stems 60cm-100cm above ground level and immediately spray the remaining foliage with herbicide until wet, but not dripping.

#### Spray application

- A 'weed wiper' sprayer can also be used to spray the plants. If using a weed wiper, allow the wiping area to become fully saturated before starting and make sure the wiping area remains moist and clean.

### Summary of herbicides and application methods for control

Herbicide	Application
Glyphosate gel	Cut stump treatment.
Glyphosate	Spray application.

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.



### What does it look like?



#### Flower

- Small white flowers.
- Produced from September to December.



#### Fruit/seed

- Large numbers of berries (8mm), green ripening to orange-red, each with 1-2 seeds.
- Fruit from October to February.



#### Leaves/stems

- Feathery, fern-like leaves (5cm-15cm long)
- Leaves grow along the stem in one plane (will lie flat in your hand).
- Stems are thin and wiry.
- White underground tuberous roots.

