

IDENTIFYING & MANAGING

INVASIVE WEEDS

Find out what weed you're dealing with and whether toxins are necessary. You can use Google or try a phone app such as ID Weeds or Find-A-Pest.

There are four main methods for dealing with invasive weeds:

1. Organic removal – digging it out completely.
2. Stump treatment – cutting the top off and applying paste to the stump.
3. Drilling and injecting herbicide – commonly used for tobacco weed.
4. Foliar spraying – wetting the entire plant, though this may also affect surrounding vegetation.

Make sure removed material doesn't regrow, particularly seeds. Some need to go into household rubbish, while others can be burned. Certain plant material, such as Tradescantia and Madeira vine nodules, can be frozen. Bulbs and rhizomes can either be rotted down in a water barrel or destroyed using a spade.

When dealing with taller weeds, such as climbing asparagus, consider cutting them down to knee height first. This makes spraying safer and reduces the amount of toxins needed. Spot spraying is preferable to blanket spraying, which can harm the environment and encourage hardier weeds to take over.

Be aware that some herbicides are non-biodegradable and remain harmful for long periods. All herbicides are toxic to some degree and may cause illnesses or permanent damage, including eye, skin, and respiratory issues. Long-term exposure can even lead to cancer or fatal conditions. Herbicides affect soil life and wildlife, so should be avoided whenever possible.

Picloram and Metsulfuron-Methyl, two active ingredients in various products, can translocate through the soil if accidentally spilled, potentially killing non-target plants.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Always check the label of any herbicide you use.
- Monitor the weather forecast for wind and rain before spraying.
- Cover up as much skin as possible, including hair.
- Follow all instructions carefully.
- Be aware of legal requirements for spraying on public land/roads (signage at 100m without a shelter belt, otherwise 50m).
- If spraying near neighbours, inform them in advance—they may need to stay indoors, close windows, or remove washing from the line.

If you use chemicals regularly or in large amounts, we recommend downloading the safety data sheet for your product online. This link will provide detailed guidance on handling and potential risks:

<https://chemicalsafety.com/sds-search/>

Need more help? Contact us on: habitat@piroaconservation.org.nz

Further Resources: Piroa Conservation Trusts [Downloadable Guides](#)

<https://www.nrc.govt.nz/pestcontrolhub>

<https://www.weedbusters.org.nz>