

Cathedral bells

Cobaea scandens

Family

Cobaeaceae (cobaea)

Also known as

Cup and saucer vine

Where is it originally from?

Central and South America

What does it look like?

Evergreen, climbing vine (<6 m), with angled stems with hooklike tips. Leaves are arranged alternately on stems, and are made up of 3 pairs of oval leaflets (including small basal pair) that are dark green above, whitish below, with branched tendrils that are purplish when young and woody at the base. Midrib has twining tendrils. Bell-shaped flowers (6-7 cm long, Dec-May) that are green and smelly when young and become deep purple develop into green seed capsules (55-85 mm long) containing winged seeds (10-15 mm).

Why is it weedy?

Seeds are moderately to well-dispersed, moderate growth rate, scrambles over most species, grows to canopy, and forms dense, long-lived masses. Moderately tolerant of shade, drought or damp, wind, salt, differing soil types, and damage.

How does it spread?

Seed is carried a short distance by wind, but most spread is through dumped vegetation, soil movement or scrambling habit. Gardens are a common source.

What damage does it do?

Smothers all plants up to medium to high canopy, preventing the establishment of native plant seedlings.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Open and intact forest and forest margins, coastline, and shrublands, especially in low-frost areas.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Hand pull small plants and single vines: trace the vines back to the roots and then dig these out. Ensure no vines are trailing on the ground as these will take root. Dispose of any plant material at a refuse transfer station or bury deeply.
2. Stump swab (all year round): cut vines as close to the roots as possible, and treat rooted ends liberally with a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (100ml/L) or a product containing 200g 2,4-D+100g dicamba/L (200ml/L) or picloram gel or dicamba 50g/L (400ml/L). Can sucker from cut material, so treat cut material with herbicide, bury deeply, or dispose of at a refuse transfer station.
3. Spray (spring-summer): a product containing 200g 2,4-D+100g dicamba/L (120ml/10L) or dicamba 50g/L (24ml/L).
4. Spray (spring-summer) from ground level to 2m high: a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (60ml/10L + penetrant) or triclopyr 600 EC (60ml/10L + penetrant) or triclopyr 120g/L (250ml/10L).

CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and directions for the purchase, use and storage of the product, are followed and adhered to.



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Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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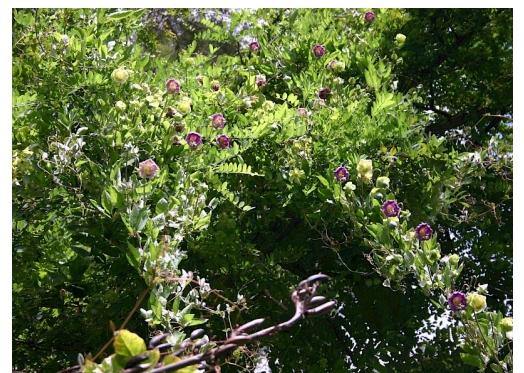


Photo: Trevor James

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Stumps resprout very quickly. Dispose of cut fragments on ground and leave other parts to die in air. Follow up 6-monthly on seedlings.