

Darwin's barberry

Berberis darwinii

Family

Berberidaceae (barberry)

Where is it originally from?

Chile and Argentina

What does it look like?

Evergreen, spiny, yellow-wooded shrub (<4+ m tall) with tough, woody and densely hairy stems with tough, 5-pronged, needle-sharp spines. Hairless, glossy, dark green leaves (10-30 x 5-15 mm) are usually spiny-serrated along edges. Hanging clusters (7 cm long) of deep orange-yellow flowers (5-7 mm diameter, July-Feb) are followed by oval purplish-black berries (5-7 mm diameter) with a bluish-white surface.

Are there any similar species?

European barberry (*B. vulgaris*) is deciduous and has red berries. *B. souliana*, *B. wilsonae* are both cultivated. Barberry (*B. glaucocarpa*) has paler yellow flowers and less glossy leaves.

Why is it weedy?

Long-lived plant, with well-dispersed seeds. Tolerates moderate to cold temperatures, damp to dry conditions, high wind, salt, shade, damage, grazing (not browsed), and a range of soils.

How does it spread?

Birds and possibly possums eat the berries containing the seeds. Occasionally spread by soil and water movement.

What damage does it do?

Scattered plants (occasionally dense stands) replace shrubland and regenerating forest, sometimes permanently in open habitats.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Disturbed forest and shrubland, short tussockland, herbfield, and bare land.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Grub out (all year round). Leave on site to rot down.
2. Stump swab (all year round): glyphosate (200ml/L) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/L) or picloram gel or a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (100ml/L) or triclopyr 600 EC (200ml/L).
3. Cut and squirt (all year round): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (1g/100mm stem diameter).
4. Spray (spring-autumn): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/10L) or a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (25ml/10L).

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Cut stumps resprout quickly, and can be hard to kill and seeds will germinate onto bare land. Follow up 6 monthly. Replant bare sites to minimise seeding.



www.weedbusters.org.nz



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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