# Japanese spindle tree

# Euonymus japonicus

#### **Family**

Celastraceae

#### Also known as

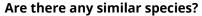
Japanese spindle tree

# Where is it originally from?

Japan, China and Korea

### What does it look like?

Hairless, evergreen shrub or small tree (<7 m tall) with much branched stems. Round or slightly 4-ribbed twigs are usually smooth but wrinkle when dry. Glossy, ovalish, finely toothed leaves (25-70 mm long) are in opposite pairs along stems. Usually grown as a variegated yellow-leaved cultivar, but all seedlings revert to the green form. Greenish flowers are insignificant and in clusters of 5-many. Fleshy, round, pink seed capsules (6-10 mm diameter) are 4-celled with orange to red flesh surrounding seeds.



*Euonymus europaeu*s is similar. Many native species are similar, but none have fine-toothed leaf margins or pink seed capsules.

# Why is it weedy?

Produces many, well dispersed seeds. Tolerates shade, wind, salt, poor soils, hot to cool temperatures, and high to moderate rainfall.

#### How does it spread?

Birds and possibly possums, and occasionally by soil and water movement. Common seed sources are gardens, parks, and roadsides. It is a garden escape species that is commonly cultivated, but because wild plants revert to a green-leaved form, they are often not recognised as seedlings of the yellow-leaved parents.

#### What damage does it do?

Forms dense stands in open or shade, preventing the establishment of native plant seedlings.

# Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Disturbed bush and shrubland, coastal shrub and bare land, inshore islands, pohutukawa forest, forest margins, and cliffs.

# What can I do to get rid of it?

- 1. Pull out all small plants (all year round). Leave on site to rot down.
- 2. Cut down and paint stump (all year round): glyphosate (200ml/L) or metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (1g/L) or a product containing 100g picloram+300g triclopyr/L (100ml/L) or triclopyr 600 EC (100ml/L) or triclopyr 120g/L (500ml/L).

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Photo: Carolyn Lewis



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3. Spray (all year round): metsulfuron-methyl 600g/kg (5g/10L + penetrant) or triclopyr 600 EC (30ml/10L + penetrant) or triclopyr 120g/L (15ml/L).

#### What can I do to stop it coming back?

Reseeds in bared sites and cut stumps resprout, so ongoing followup is required to ensure eradication.