

Don't let them get away!

Invasive weeds are most effectively controlled when they and their numbers are small – a little weed control work today will save many dollars and days of work in years to come. As the area infested by Elisha's tears in Southern Tasmania is still relatively limited, now is the time to take action!

Control that weed!

Control methods for this weed may include a combination of mechanical removal, the selective application of herbicides and ongoing monitoring.

Smaller Elisha's tears plants can be **hand-pulled** or **dug** out.

Larger plants can be **treated with herbicides** from spring through to autumn, using the cut-and-paint, or drill-and-fill technique. Within Tasmania, herbicides registered for use on Elisha's tears include 'frog friendly' glyphosate-based products. **Always read and follow the label**, wear protective equipment, and avoid off-target damage during chemical control.

It is important to ensure that all fragments of Elisha's tears are removed from the site, as pieces of this plant strike readily on moist soil.

The best solution for your site will vary with the type and intensity of infestation, and will probably involve using a combination of these methods. For advice and more details on control of Elisha's tears, consult the DPIPWE website (www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/weeds)

Do the right thing

Weed waste dumped in bushland or local reserves gives pest plants a leg-up into new areas. Do the right thing, and dispose of your weed waste responsibly.

Weeds are easily spread by contaminated machinery and people – check your clothes, shoes and vehicles for soil or plant matter that could be carrying weedy plant seeds. And make sure tip-bound waste is properly secured – the seeds that blow off your trailer today will become the weeds that infest our environment tomorrow.

Elisha's tears can easily be spread by inappropriate disposal – one fragment of root or stem can sprout into a whole new plant on contact with moist soil. Bag up any pieces of Elisha's tears that you have removed, and burn them at an appropriate location. Consult your local fire authority

Get informed

Elisha's tears is a significant weed threat for Southern Tasmania. For more information contact your local Council office or call DPIPWE on 1300 368 550.



weeds of southern tasmania

elisha's tears

Leycesteria formosa

Also known as
Himalayan honeysuckle

Impacts
Aggressively invades riparian areas and wetlands
May be toxic to some animals

Current distribution in Southern Tasmania
Derwent Valley, Hobart/Glenorchy area around Mt Wellington, Kingborough and Huon Valley



weed warning

elisha's tears



Background

Elisha's tears (*Leycesteria formosa*) is native to China, Burma, Nepal and Japan. It is first thought to have been introduced to Australia in the mid 1800s, where it first appeared in Victorian gardening catalogues in 1855. It was noticed naturalising outside of plantings in the early 1900s, and has become a more visibly damaging weed in south-eastern Australia since the 1980s.

Elisha's tears readily invades many different types of wet, damp and riparian vegetation, smothering the understorey plants and forming dense, single-species stands. Where this occurs, native fauna is deprived of food and habitat, and native flora is also shaded out. This plant produces berries which are eaten by birds and other animals, who spread them further afield. The berries are also thought to be potentially poisonous to some animals. Elisha's tears also strikes readily from broken fragments of stalk or root, which allows it to move down rivers and creeks alarmingly swiftly to invade new areas.

This pest plant is more than capable of invading intact and healthy native vegetation, having done so over large areas in Victoria and New South Wales. Populations within Tasmania are still relatively limited, but without active intervention, the same thing could easily happen here.

Get a positive ID

Elisha's tears is a soft-wooded, bushy shrub that can grow up to two metres tall. Stems are green, hollow, hairless or almost so, and bear leaves in opposite pairs. The leaves of this plant are a much darker green on their upper surface than on the underside, and are roughly oval in shape with pointed tips. Leaves can be quite variable in size – they may be anything between 3-15cm long and from 1-10cm wide. It is a deciduous plant that generally loses its leaves in winter, although some leaves may still hang on in warmer areas.

The flowers are showy and distinctive – generally white or pink, they are tubular in shape, 10-12cm long, hairy, and hang in pendulous clusters at the ends of branchlets. The flower clusters are partially enfolded by small purple or greenish bracts (a type of modified leaf). Elisha's tears flowers from late spring to autumn, and forms fruit from summer through autumn. The fruits formed reddish-purple to black berries that are oval in shape, 6-10mm long, each of which contains many seeds.

If you believe you have found Elisha's tears, collect a sample of it in a sealed bag and contact your local Council office or a DPIPWE representative.

Weed management – it's your responsibility

Many people unwittingly harbour pest plants in their gardens – some even actively grow them, knowing nothing of their weedy ways.

Although Elisha's tears is not widespread in Tasmania, it may have already made its way onto your land.

This plant is a declared weed under Tasmania's *Weed Management Act 1999*. It is your responsibility to control Elisha's tears on your land. Failure to remove it from your property could result in legal action.

It is also illegal to distribute the plant or its seed in any way, whether as cut flowers, in contaminated feed, on livestock or on dirty equipment.

**Weeds are a growing problem.
Act now – make a plan and make a start!**

Images:

1. The tubular white flowers of Elisha's tears
2. Small purple flower bracts with fruits below
3. Dark green leaves in opposite pairs