

## 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 karamu 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 control, selective application of herbicides and ongoing monitoring.

Karamu seedlings are often easily removed by **hand-pulling**. Slightly larger plants may be dug out if necessary.

Larger plants can be **chemically controlled**, using the cut-and-paint, drill-and-fill, or frilling techniques. Appropriate herbicides registered for use on karamu within Tasmania include “frog friendly” glyphosate-based products that are safe to use near waterways. **Always read and follow the label**, wear protective equipment, and avoid off-target damage during chemical control.

If faced with a large infestation of karamu, **flowering and fruiting plants should be prioritised as targets for immediate removal**. It is thought that karamu plants don't produce viable seeds before they are 3 years old, so if you're short on time or resources, it's most effective to target fruiting/ seeding plants to prevent more new seedlings from popping up next season.

Areas where plants have been removed should be **monitored** (karamu seeds may remain viable in the soil for up to 5 years), and any seedlings which emerge controlled.

The best solution for your site will vary with the type and intensity of infestation – for advice and more details on control methods, consult the DPIPW website ([www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/weeds](http://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.

Non-fruiting branches of karamu may be added to your compost pile. Double-bag any of the branches you have removed which bear karamu fruits, and burn them on-site. Consult your local fire authority.

Weeds are easily spread by contaminated machinery and people – check your clothes, shoes, vehicles and other machinery for soil or plant matter that could be carrying karamu seeds.

## Get informed

Karamu is a significant weed threat for Southern Tasmania. If you believe you have discovered an infestation, contact your local Council office or call DPIPW on 1300 368 550.



## weeds of southern tasmania



karamu  
*Coprosma robusta*

### Impacts

Biodiversity and riparian areas

### Current distribution in Southern Tasmania

Derwent River near New Norfolk, areas around Mt Wellington, South Bruny and Recherche Bay



weed warning

# karamu



## Background

Karamu (*Coprosma robusta*) was first introduced to Australia in the late 1800s as a nursery plant. Native to New Zealand, it was first recorded in Tasmania at Ferntree, on Mt. Wellington in 1948. The first signs of karamu going weedy in native vegetation were noted in Victoria in 1968, where it was seen to be establishing in a patch of native bushland.

Karamu produces many fleshy seeds that are readily eaten and spread by birds, and likely to also be spread by other native and introduced animals. It is capable of becoming established across a range of environmental and climactic zones, and unlike many weeds, can successfully invade healthy and intact damp and wet forests. Within Tasmania, karamu poses a threat to a range of lowland forest types, coastal vegetation and riparian areas, and is hardy enough to survive periods of flooding or inundation.

Karamu's distribution within Tasmania is presently quite small, with the plant being known from New Norfolk, Fern Tree, South Bruny, Recherche Bay and the Gordon River Dam. However, without rapid action, this pest plant has the potential to spread through many of Southern Tasmania's native ecosystems.

## Get a positive ID

Karamu grows as a large shrub or small tree, generally not reaching more than six metres in height. Karamu leaves are oval, pointed at the end, and sit opposite one another in pairs on branchlets. Leaves are generally 5-12cm long, 3-5cm wide, a dark, matt green on the upper surface, and a lighter green underneath.

Karamu flowers in spring and summer, producing inconspicuous small greenish flowers which cluster at the base of the leaves. These flowers develop into oval, yellow to orange or reddish fleshy fruits 8-9mm long, 4-5mm wide, each of which contain four seeds within them. Karamu fruits may appear at any time from summer through to winter, and are attractive to birds and other animals which consume them and spread them further afield.

Karamu may be confused with mirror bush (*Coprosma repens*), another weed to which it is closely related.

Karamu can be distinguished from mirror bush by its leaves – the upper surface of mirror bush leaves are very shiny and glossy – those of karamu are not.

If you believe you have found karamu, collect a sample of it in a sealed bag and contact your local Council office or a DPI/PWE 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 karamu is not widespread in Southern 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 karamu 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. Karamu leaves
2. Male Karamu flowers
3. Female Karamu flowers