

Jerusalem cherry

Solanum pseudocapsicum and *Solanum diflorum*

Family

Solanaceae (nightshade)

Also known as

Madeira winter cherry

Where is it originally from?

South America

What does it look like?

Erect, bushy, evergreen shrub (<120+ cm) which is usually hairless or with a few branched hairs on young shoots. Stems are wiry and much branched. Dark green, lance-shaped leaves (3-12 x 1-3 cm) are alternately arranged on the stems and glossy on the top surface. White 5-pointed star shaped flowers (15 mm diameter) with yellow centres (Oct-May) are followed by round, glossy, long-lasting orange to scarlet berries (15-20 mm diameter) containing seeds (3 mm diameter).

Are there any similar species?

Jaffa'-like berries distinguish these two species from other plants. *Solanum diflorum* is uncommon, shorter, has dense hairs on young shoots and new leaves, but is otherwise identical.

Why is it weedy?

Produces many, well dispersed seeds and forms dense stands in shady spots. Tolerates shade, damage and treading around roots (poisonous, not grazed), wet to moderate dry conditions and hot temperatures but is intolerant of frost, competition for space, high winds, and poor soils.

How does it spread?

Seeds are spread by birds and water and soil movement, and in dumped vegetation. Common seed sources include grazed bush remnants, hedgerows, and many other shady places.

What damage does it do?

Can form dense stands in disturbed (especially grazed) forest and shrubland. Usually succeeded with competition for ground space.

Which habitats is it likely to invade?

Disturbed forest and shrubland, and shady open habitats.

What can I do to get rid of it?

1. Hand pull all but the largest plants (all year round). Leave on site to rot down.
2. Spray plants over 30 cm tall (spring-autumn): glyphosate (10ml/L).

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.

What can I do to stop it coming back?

Cut stumps occasionally resprout. Reseeds densely in bared sites. Exclude livestock at all times, maintain pest control. Usually natural regeneration will overtake plant in time. Replanting, especially of ferns, can accelerate process.



www.weedbusters.org.nz



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



Photo: Carolyn Lewis



Photo: Trevor James