



The Challenge of Environmental Weeds in an Urban Area

Prevalence of Weeds

- **Auckland is the weediest city in the world (Landcare Research)**
- **Weeds in New Zealand are a growing problem, often causing irreversible damage to ecosystems (Landcare Research).**
- **\$40 million is spent each year in New Zealand monitoring ports and airports for new plant arrivals and preventing weed introduction and spread. An estimated \$350 million is spent on controlling weeds in New Zealand (Landcare Research).**

Boundary Issues and Buffer Zones

- Upstream weeds, uncontrolled weeds in reserves, and weeds spreading from neighbouring properties increase the weed control problem. Local community can help reduce weeds in their neighbourhood.
- There is a need to be strategic by creating weed free buffer zones around important ecological sites, educating and supporting property owners in adjacent areas, as well as expert weed management of the ecological sites

A quick introduction to weeds

- Roy Clements Treeway

Approx 80% of weeds are light dependent and thrive in open unshaded areas. *Tradescantia* is one exception, along with Veldt grass. The latter threatens our small native grass *Microlaena stipoides*. Climbers, like bindweed (below right) can strangle young native plants.



***Tradescantia* (right) spreading from the floodplain, threatens the survival of lava flow forest, preventing natural regeneration and willow weed (below) can smother young wetland plants**



Tree weeds like privet, willow and box elder (*Acer negundo*) threaten to take over our native forest, growing far more vigorously than most of our endemic species and seedling prolifically (below – box elder seedlings)



A huge threat to the native floodplain grasses is kikuyu (bottom left) which grows up to 5 m long strands with underground runners. It is capable of smothering our restoration efforts. Controlling this weed is an ongoing battle and demands persistence and creative solutions.



Before control



After control

Weed achievements in the last year - RCT

- **200 bags of Tradescantia removed**
- **9 cubic metres of kikuyu composted**
- **Many other weeds controlled manually or with selective chemical applications**
- **Native seedlings potted up for infill planting**
- **Infill planting carried out where kikuyu has been removed**
- **Funding from the Albert-Eden Local Board for coordination work with local groups and also to undertake a scoping project in the local neighbourhood to see if locals would like help sorting out their weeds.**

