

montane shrublands in New Zealand are threatened. Wilding conifers (contorta pine, Douglas fir, Austrian pine, radiata pine, mountain pine and larch) have spread from plantations and shelter belts into the open mountainous country on the eastern slopes of the Southern Alps and in the Central North Island. In many of these places, infestations are (so far) comparatively localised, but wilding conifers are capable of spreading rapidly and extensively because the seeds disperse on the wind. Other invasive weeds in sub-alpine areas include heather, broom, gorse, rowan and hawkweeds.

Forests and shrublands:

Many invasive weeds threaten native shrublands and kauri, beech and podocarp-broadleaf forest in more than 110 important, high ranking sites covering 150 000

Old man's beard smothers a hillside near Taihape.
D. Smith



Wandering Jew covers forest floors and prevents new tree seedlings establishing.
D. Kelly



hectares. These weeds include old man's beard, Japanese honeysuckle, banana passionfruit, climbing spindleberry, climbing asparagus, mistflower, wandering Jew, wild ginger, sycamore, Darwin's barberry, hawthorn, buddleia, evergreen buckthorn and others. Climbing vines can strangle, smother or collapse canopy trees. Other weeds prevent regeneration or out-compete and displace understorey plants and canopy trees. In Puketi Forest in Northland, for example, mistflower infests the lower waterways and tracks, smothering native hebes, coprosmas and ferns that grow alongside streams.

Right: Wild ginger almost covers this hillside between the trees in Northland.
Chris Buddenhagen, 1998

