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SUSTAINABLE BIOSECURITY SOLUTIONS

**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

## **Combating Old Man's Beard**

*Native Restorations Leads the Fight Against Invasive Plants in New Zealand*

### [Old Man's Beard \(Clematis vitalba\)](#)

**New Zealand, [May 2024]** – New Zealand's unique biodiversity is increasingly threatened by invasive pest plants, which disrupt native ecosystems and degrade habitats. One of the most notorious of these invaders is Old Man's Beard (*Clematis vitalba*), a vine that poses a significant threat to the country's native flora. At Native Restorations, we are dedicated to eradicating these pest species and restoring native vegetation to protect our natural heritage.

“We are hearing a lot of chatter on social media platforms about the prevalence of Old Mans Beard in bushland and also in local settings,” Terence Stewart, the Founder and Owner of [Native Restorations](#) Owner says. “It’s important for the everyday Kiwi to understand how to correctly remove this pest plant, and to seek professional advice for removal to ensure they do not continue the spread.”

Old Man's Beard is a vigorous climber that forms dense, tangled mats capable of smothering native vegetation. This [invasive plant](#) is prevalent across New Zealand and sadly in many homes.

### **Important Steps to Prevent the Spread of Old Man's Beard**

Terence Stewart, Founder and Owner of Native Restorations, emphasises the critical need to prevent the spread of Old Man's Beard, especially when it is in full flower. Here are the steps to properly remove this invasive plant:

1. **Cut the Vine:** Cut the vine close to the ground. Do not pull it from the other foliage as this could release flowers and further spread the plant.

2. **Apply Herbicide:** Immediately poison the vine at both cutting points—the roots and the tangled vine.
3. **Leave the Vine:** Let the cut vine remain off the ground. Wrap it around other foliage to ensure the poison works at both ends.

Terence explains, “By cutting and poisoning both ends, you effectively kill the plant without increasing the risk of spreading its flowers and seeds. Avoid pulling the vine from your foliage until it is completely dead to prevent further spreading into your garden.”

Terence also suggests using Corteva Vigilant Herbicide Gel as the product traces back to the root. “It will need a number of applications over a few months,” he advises. “A good process is to be as thorough as you can and then check a month later and apply to the vines that are still alive. The dead vines will be obvious by then and will make it easier to find the living vines to be sure that you have got it all, or as much as possible.”

By following these steps, you can help protect New Zealand's native ecosystems from the invasive Old Man's Beard.

“This invasive plant outcompetes native species for light and nutrients,” he says. “This often leads to the death of the host plants.”

Its rapid growth and ability to spread through wind-dispersed seeds make it particularly challenging to control.

“At Native Restorations, we believe in proactive and sustainable pest plant management through removal, invasive species control and community education.”

- **Pest Plant Removal** – “Essential for restoring native habitats, we employ manual removal and herbicide application to eradicate invasive species like Old Man's Beard.”
- **Invasive Species Control** – “We use a combination of control measures to manage and prevent the spread of these plants, ensuring the ecological balance is restored.”
- **Community Education** – “By educating the local community, we empower individuals to identify and manage pest plants in their own backyards.”

“Removing invasive plants like Old Man's Beard is crucial for protecting New Zealand's ecosystems.”

Native Restorations invites all Kiwis to join our efforts in combating these threats. Here's how you can help:

- **Learn to Identify Pest Plants** - Familiarise yourself with common invasive plants using resources such as field guides and online databases.

- **Report Sightings** - Inform local authorities or conservation agencies if you spot invasive species in your area.
- **Participate in Conservation Activities** - Engage in local eradication efforts and support habitat restoration projects.

### **About Native Restorations**

Native Restorations is a leading conservation organisation dedicated to preserving New Zealand's natural heritage. We specialise in invasive species control, habitat restoration, and community education to ensure the survival of our precious native wildlife.

### **AS SEEN IN:**

***Page 13, The Blenheim Sun Newspaper***

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