

13. Woolly nightshade

Solanum mauritianum



What is woolly nightshade?

Woolly nightshade is a quick-growing, invasive weed. It can quickly take over open habitats. Plants can grow up to ten metres high.

Why is woolly nightshade a problem for NZ?

Woolly nightshade plants grow closely together, shading out any native plants and threatening their survival.

It is also poisonous to people.



How do I know it's woolly nightshade?

Woolly nightshade has soft, furry leaves. They are large and oval in shape.

Stems are a grey colour and are covered in light hairs. Purple flowers with 5 petals and yellow centres grow in groups at most times of the year. These become green-yellow berries. Woolly nightshade can also have an unpleasant smell.

How does it spread?

Even though the berries are poisonous to people, kererū and other birds can safely eat them, spreading seeds over large areas through their droppings.

Each plant produces thousands of seeds, which also fall and grow around parent plants.



Woolly nightshade is from South America



CAUTION- WOOLLY NIGHTSHADE BERRIES ARE POISONOUS. LEAVES CAN IRRITATE THE SKIN, EYES AND THROAT. USE GLOVES WHEN HANDLING.

For more detailed information about woolly nightshade and how to control its spread see: weedbusters.org.nz

