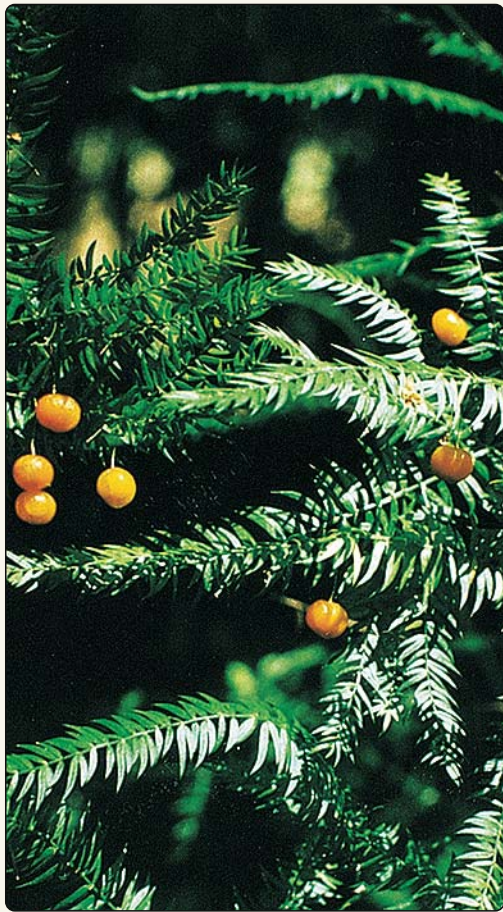


Climbing asparagus (*Asparagus scandens*)



Foliage and half ripe berries

Climbing asparagus is a scrambling or climbing vine in the same family as smilax. It can invade the forest interior even in undamaged forests and is shade tolerant.

The plant has attractive fine, fern-like foliage with leaves arranged in one plane. The stems, arising from tuberous roots, are slender, up to 2 m long and extensively branched, wrapping around small trees and saplings. Tiny white flowers are formed from September to December and these produce a plentiful supply of small round berries that ripen from green through to orange and red. The main source of spread is birds dispersing the seeds, although dumping of garden rubbish is also a factor.

The best method of control is to cut stems above the ground and carefully dig out all roots and tubers. The tubers should be composted, deeply buried or sun baked in a sealed plastic bag. Alternatively, treat in spring or early summer with a herbicide, either using a weed-wiper or sprayer.

Contact your Regional Council for advice on control methods.