

Climbing spindle berry* (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)



Yellow fruit with a scarlet centre



Small, green inconspicuous flowers

* Also known as **Oriental bittersweet**

Climbing spindle berry is a deciduous, climbing perennial that can mature into a trailing shrub up to 12m tall. The vine prefers open, sunny sites but is shade tolerant, forming dense colonies in forest margins, disturbed native bush and roadsides.

The young twigs are green, with short sharp spines on the winter buds. Older branches are greyish brown. The glossy round or oval leaves are 5-10 cm long, arranged alternately on the stem, and turn yellow before they fall in the autumn. Small, green inconspicuous flowers are followed by showy orange or yellow fruit with a scarlet centre. Birds eat the fruit and disperse the seeds. The plant also spreads by its roots sending up suckers.

Vines are best controlled by pulling them out by the roots before they set fruit. Larger plants are best controlled by cutting the stems and treating the rooted ends with a herbicide.

Climbing spindle berry is of limited distribution in the wild in New Zealand. Any suspected new sightings should be reported to your Regional Council who can give advice on control methods.