



## CREDITS

Thank you to Di Carter CCC Ranger for the text and photos and for her assistance with this project.

# SPUR VALERIAN

*(Centranthus ruber)*

A threat to rock outcrop vegetation  
in Whakaraupō / Lyttelton Harbour



### WHAT IS SPUR VALERIAN?

Spur valerian (*Centranthus ruber*) is a plant that flowers from September-December and February-April. It has white, pink or magenta coloured flowers. Originally from the Mediterranean it likes rocky and coastal habitats. It naturalised in NZ from the late 1870s. It has fine wind borne seeds, which disperse and establish easily.

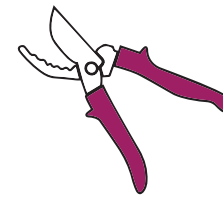
### WHY IS SPUR VALERIAN A THREAT?

In Canterbury, spur valerian is now dispersing from gardens and roadside embankments into natural rock outcrop areas, both limestone and basalt, where it inhibits and directly competes with the rock outcrop vegetation. The unique volcanic rock outcrops of the Port Hills and Banks Peninsula host a number of Banks Peninsula endemic plants, two nationally threatened plants, a number of uncommon plant species, and some fine examples of rock outcrop vegetation. This natural rock outcrop vegetation is prone to invasion by spur valerian which can form dense thickets that will displace much of the natural low growing vegetation and potentially alter habitat for native fauna. In order to protect the flora on the rock outcrops on Banks Peninsula, the Summit Road Society, Christchurch City Council, private landowners and volunteer groups are undertaking sustained control of spur valerian around the harbour.

In order to protect the unique flora on the rock outcrops around Whakaraupō, we are asking for your help to remove and control spur valerian on your property. This will help reduce the spread around Whakaraupō and onto Banks Peninsula.

### CONTROLLING SPUR VALERIAN

Cutting and stump treating spur valerian is easy. The plant looks large, but the many branching stems lead back to a large woody tap root that can be easily cut off at the base. The remaining stump needs to be treated with a chemical gel to stop re-sprouting. In soil, cut well down the single tap root, as cutting across the mass of sprouting stems can be less effective.



Spraying the entire foliage of each plant with a suitable weedkiller and surfactant is effective, e.g. Grazon (6mls/litre) or glyphosate (10mls/litre). Due to the long flowering season and rapid recruitment, spraying 3 times a season is required to reduce further seeding (September/November/February is ideal). Seedlings will need to be controlled 3 times a year for at least 5 years.



If you would like to keep this plant on your property, de-heading the flowers before they go to seed at the end of each flowering period (October/November, January/February, March/April) is another way to reduce seed spread.

There is no legal obligation to control spur valerian, however, we would very much appreciate your help in reducing the spread of this plant around Whakaraupō and onto Banks Peninsula.

