

Some bugs are a real nuisance and some are the stuff of nightmares but there are some we consider to be our great friends. These are the ones that can kill weeds – plant pests that destroy our environment.



# It's a buggy's dinner...

*Love these bugs...*

One way of controlling weeds is to set the bugs on them. After a long process of research and experimentation, different bugs have been introduced to attack specific plants.



**I am a cinnabar caterpillar.**

I feed on the leaves and flowers of ragwort, a nasty toxic plant pest. I think I'm beautiful, but I can't wait till I turn into a moth... I'll be a velvety brown colour with bright red markings.

When I'm a moth I'll lay some eggs and produce more caterpillars to feed on the ragwort.

**I am an old man's beard leaf miner.**

I am a small fly and I lay tiny eggs inside the leaves of old man's beard. The maggots that hatch after a week make tunnels



between the layers of the leaves leaving mines behind them. The mines destroy the veins and stop nutrients flowing through the leaves.

## What weed am I?

These two weeds are a real problem in Canterbury. Read the clues and then unjumble the letters to find out their names (they can be found in the word find list below).



**Lod snare dreck**  
I can be found all over New Zealand, in the country or in the city – even in your back yard! I grow very fast and smother other plants by blocking out the light. I am a terrible threat to garden shrubs, reserves and native forests. I have white fluffy flowers and look like something you'd find on a person's chin and that's how I got my name.



**nobedese**

I have come all the way from South Africa. In New Zealand I've been able to grow wild, produce many seeds and make a nuisance of myself, particularly in coastal areas. Don't be fooled by my yellow daisy-like flowers. I might look pretty but my seeds will spread everywhere and take over. You'll see a lot of me on the Port Hills. I am an awful threat to native vegetation and wildlife.

O	R	N	K	S	V	U	W	O	P	L	A	T	E
T	A	O	K	S	F	D	E	A	S	E	N	O	L
H	S	H	O	P	E	T	W	O	P	L	N	L	T
A	S	T	E	D	E	E	S	E	N	O	B	D	S
R	A	E	K	M	V	N	T	S	H	L	H	M	I
K	T	A	G	E	L	D	R	P	P	M	H	A	H
E	R	O	K	N	S	O	I	O	R	P	A	N	T
T	O	E	E	N	T	S	C	O	A	L	O	S	G
E	W	T	S	B	O	T	S	K	R	E	D	B	N
A	G	R	E	R	N	I	W	O	P	E	D	E	I
N	A	U	A	O	N	E	E	P	D	A	A	D	
O	R	G	O	O	V	G	R	A	S	E	E	R	D
O	A	H	N	M	I	E	W	O	P	L	E	D	O
L	T	O	N	E	P	D	M	A	U	L	N	O	N

**Plant  
pest  
word  
find**

Can you find the following words?

- Gorse
- Broom
- Nodding thistle
- Old man's beard
- Ragwort
- Boneseed
- Hemlock
- Lagarosiphon (oxygen weed)

**Are your  
gnomes  
gnawing  
plant  
terrapin  
pests?**

Take a wander around your own back yard. You might be surprised to find some destructive weeds in there. When you identify plant pests you should find out the best way to get rid of them. Sometimes just chopping down the plant is no good as its seeds may still spread and a weed killer may be needed to stop it coming back.

You can find out more about plant pests and what to do with them by contacting Environment Canterbury on (03) 365 3828.