

Otago Regional Council

NOV 2026

Plant Pest

Report this pest

# False tamarisk

## Why is it a pest?

False tamarisk changes the natural environment of stony riverbeds.

It reduces nesting habitat for birds in braided riverbeds and provides cover for their predators. While it can stabilise riverbeds, false tamarisk can significantly impact the natural flow of rivers by spreading across sparsely vegetated areas, forming dense bushes with deep roots.

False tamarisk spreads via small, fluffy seeds dispersed by wind and water. It can also regenerate from stem and root fragments, which may be transported by vehicles passing through riverbeds and carrying sand, mud or plant material.

False tamarisk has not been reported in Otago.

## What does it look like?

- **Size:** False tamarisk is a shrub that sheds its leaves every year and can grow up to 1.5 metres tall.
- **Leaves:** Small bluish-green triangular leaves on upright branches. The shape of its leaves gives it a conifer-like appearance.
- **Flowers:** Small pink flowers grow in clusters at the ends of its branches from January, followed by small grey seed capsules in February and March.
- **Root system:** Older plants can have extensive root systems, making them very difficult to pull from the ground.
- **Habitat:** False tamarisk thrives on riparian margins and braided riverbeds and is found on stony, muddy and sandy damp sites alongside river channels.



**Common name:**
False tamarisk

**Scientific name:**
*Myricaria germanica*

**Management programme:**
Exclusion

The exclusion programme aims to stop certain pests that are in very low numbers or in surrounding areas from establishing in Otago.

**Report this pest!**

If you have seen or suspect the presence of this pest, you **must report** the sighting to us at **orc.govt.nz/reportpests**

**Images:** Weedbusters

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## When can I spot it?

False tamarisk is easiest to spot from January to March when in flower or seeding.

## What are the rules?

To prevent the establishment of false tamarisk in Otago and its negative environmental and economic effects, it is in the exclusion programme of the Otago Regional Pest Management Plan (2019–2029).

False tamarisk is declared an unwanted organism in the National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA).

Any species declared a pest under the NPPA cannot be sold or be in a place where plants are being sold. Pest plants cannot be propagated, bred, multiplied, communicated, released, caused to be released, or otherwise spread.

## What should I do?

**If you think you have false tamarisk on your property, please contact us.**





**Report this pest**

# Help us find false tamarisk

You must notify Otago Regional Council if you suspect the presence of this pest.

**If you think you've seen it:**

- **Note the location**
- **Take a photo** (if possible)
- **Report this pest at orc.govt.nz/reportpests**

For more information, visit **orc.govt.nz/falsetamarisk**

**Images:** Weedbusters