

PNRA: IVY POLICY

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The PNRA has a policy to actively cut back ivy that is growing around and into public trees, and also ivy that is growing up City Power poles.

All **City Power poles**, including light poles, need to be kept clear of all vegetation so that:

1. The base of the poles can be regularly inspected. In the event that the metal is failing, the PNRA escalates this to City Power with a request for replacement of the pole.
2. There is no growth onto the numbers on each pole which are used as a reference when reporting issues to City Power. The numbers need to remain clearly legible at all times.

Common name: English ivy **Scientific name:** Hedera helix **Alternative common names:** Engelse heder (Afrikaans).

Hedera Helix and its cultivars is an evergreen climbing vine. It is aggressive invader that threatens all vegetation levels of forested and open areas, growing along the ground as well as into the forest canopy. It is widely used as a fast-growing, low maintenance, evergreen groundcover and climber but, once established at a site, it can be expected to move beyond its intended borders by vegetative means or by seed dispersal.



How does it spread?

Seeds are dispersed to new areas primarily by birds, which eat the berries.

Why is it a problem?

The impacts of English ivy include a decrease in indigenous vegetation and the loss of biodiversity. The dense growth and abundant leaves, which spring from the stems like small umbrellas, form a thick canopy just above the ground and prevent sunlight from reaching other plants.

Does the plant have any uses?

It is widely used by homeowners, horticulturists, landscape contractors, parks departments and others who desire a fast-growing, low maintenance, evergreen ground cover or climber.

Plant me instead

Canary creeper (*Senecio tamoides*)

Source: <https://invasives.org.za/>



Ivy *does not* strangle the tree.

Ivy *does not* have a parasitic relationship with the tree, living off it and harming it.

Ivy **DOES** compete with water and nutrients in the soil at the base of the tree.

Ivy **DOES** hide structural defects in trees.

Ivy **DOES** weigh down limbs if it grows into the branches.

Ivy **DOES** adversely affect inner canopy growth.

Ivy **DOES** crowd out the beauty of attractive bark eg London Plane trees and Fever trees.

Ivy **DOES** sometime often indicate a tree in poor health eg fungal growth.

The ivy growth into the tree can weigh down branches, hide defects and mask tree disease. In time, this may affect the stability of the tree.

COMMUNITY IN ACTION