Ochna or Mickey Mouse plant

*Ochna serrulata*  
*(Non Restricted Invasive Weed)*

Ochna is another example of an ornamental species escaping into bushland. A native of Africa, it has been widely planted in Australian gardens for its strikingly attractive flowers. Ochna is easily dispersed to new areas when birds eat the fruits and spread the seeds. In south-east Queensland, this weed is commonly seen invading bare areas of disturbed riparian habitat. Ochna is an invasive plant which can disrupt native flora communities and ecosystems.

**Description**

This weed grows as a small, erect shrub up to about 1.5m tall. It is a woody shrub, and has an angled tap root that is easily broken when hand pulled.

Leaves are up to 5cm long, narrow and glossy with serrated margins. New growth usually has a bronze tinge.

Flowers are bright yellow with five petals. These petals fall off, leaving five sepals which turn scarlet red when the fruits appear. Fruits are initially green, turning glossy black in summer.

**Management**

For young seedlings hand pulling is generally the most successful method of control. Take care not to break the tap root. Larger individuals may need to be grubbed out with a mattock.

If you would like further information on the control of ochna, look at the A–Z Listing of Weeds at [Queensland Government Website](http://www.qld.gov.au).

**Reference:** Land Protection (Invasive Plants and Animals), 2007, “PP89, Weed Busters Fact Sheet”, the State of Queensland, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.