

Clematis marmoraria

COMMON NAME

North-west Nelson marble clematis

SYNONYMS

None (described in 1975)

FAMILY

Ranunculaceae

AUTHORITY

Clematis marmoraria Sneddon

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

CLEMMR

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 16$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: CD, OL

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: CD, RR

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: CD, RR

2004 | Gradual Decline

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Confined to two sites within north west Nelson, Kahurangi National Park).

HABITAT

Alpine marble karrenfield where it grows in either in crevices in massive marble, or amongst semi-fixed rocks, stones and similar rocky sites in open herbfield



In cultivation ex Hoary Head, NW Nelson.
Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken:
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In cultivation ex Hoary Head, NW Nelson.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A low rupestral dioecious subshrub with slender taproot and several stems, spreading in suitable habitats by a succession of suckers. Stems perennial, c.1-2 mm diameter, up to 500 mm long, almost or quite glabrous and inconspicuously grooved. Underground part of suckers 40-500 mm long with 2-14 pairs of much reduced leaves (internodes 1-60 mm long); usually rooting and branching at some nodes. Aerial stems erect to decumbent, very short (40-100 mm) but longer in shade, internodes 1-40 mm long; usually sparingly branched. Underground leaves 1-5 mm long, entire to minutely lobed. Green leaves ± crowded, subcoriaceous to coriaceous, almost glabrous, up to 40 mm long, living c.2 years before slowly decaying to base. Petioles 5-18 mm long, channelled, not twining. Laminae broad-ovate to angular-ovate in outline when fresh, variously dissected (with major segments ± ascending and overlapping) from multifid-multipartite to deeply 3-lobed to 3-foliolate; lobes or leaflets deeply incised 2-3 times (to bipinnate below in leaflets), upper surface of segments concave and ± bordered, ultimately small, obtuse to subacute; lateral leaflets short petioluled, oblique at base. Subfloral leaves 3-21 mm long. Inflorescence a solitary flower, axillary, ± fulvous pubescent; peduncles 25-75 mm long; bracts 1-2 pairs –lower pair (often lacking) basal, connate, blade c.2 mm long, minutely 3-lobed - upper pair 2.0-7.7 mm long, narrow-oblong to spatulate, entire or shallowly lobed. Male flower 20-30 mm diameter; sepals 5-8, white (slightly green-stained when young), thinly fulvous-silky without, glabrous within, 6-18 × 3.0-10.5 mm, obovate (occasionally elliptic); stamens 20-50, 5-9 mm long, anthers 1.0-1.8 mm long, ovate-oblong, connective produced into minute blunt apiculus; carpels 0. Female flower with slightly smaller sepals; stamens 8-13, anthers barren; carpels 20-50. Achene seed body ovoid, 3-4 mm long, puberulent, brown; style 15-30 mm long, pale fulvous-plumose

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from all other New Zealand Clematis (indigenous or naturalised) by the restriction to marble subalpine to alpine habitats, by tufted suckering shrublet growth habit; non twining petioles; and by the flowers which have pure white or faintly greenish-yellow, obovate-elliptic sepals.

FLOWERING

December

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

January - March

LIFE CYCLE

Pappate achenes are dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Can be grown from cuttings and fresh seed. Slow growing and best kept in a deep, well drained pot within an alpine house, except in cooler climates. Does best in lime rich soils.

THREATS

Apparently confined to only two sites at which it remains vulnerable to animal (goat, deer) browse.

ETYMOLOGY

clematis: From the Greek klema 'vine', alluding to the vine-like habit of many species

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from some specialist native plant nurseries. This species has been hybridised with several of the other New Zealand species to produce a range of cultivars now popular with gardeners are widely available from garden centres.

ATTRIBUTION

Description from Sneddon (1975)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Sneddon, B.V. 1975: A new Clematis from North-west Nelson, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 13: 557-65.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285-309

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/clematis-marmoraria/>