

Coprosma arborea

COMMON NAME

māmāngi, tree coprosma

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1878)

FAMILY

Rubiaceae

AUTHORITY

Coprosma arborea Kirk

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

COPARB

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Bushy small tree with pairs of small roundish thin leaves inhabiting the top half of the North Island. Trunk noticeable. Leaves thin, mottled, with small pit at junction of veins, in pairs with a small long-tipped scale between the base of the leaf stems. Fruit white.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: Three Kings and North Island, where found from Te Pahi south to near Waitomo in the west and about Gisborne in the East

HABITAT

Coastal to lower montane forest - but mostly coastal to lowland. Often forming the subcanopy in coastal kauri forest or mixed pohutukawa-hardwood forest. rarely, such as on Waiheke Island, forming a distinct forest type where it dominates the canopy.



Fruit. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Tree. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tree 8-12 m tall; trunk 200-500 mm diameter; branches rather close-set, suberect to spreading; branchlets slender, pubescent. Petioles winged in upper ½, 8-20 mm long. Stipules short, triangular, connate near base, ciliolate, with prominent denticle. Adult lamina submembranous to subcoriaceous, glabrous, somewhat glossy, 50-80 × 30-48 mm, yellow-green, dark green above, usually mottled maroon or purple, pale wine-red below, ovate to broad-elliptic to oblong, sometimes suborbicular; apex rounded or retuse, sometimes apiculate or mucronulate; cuneately or abruptly narrowed to petiole; margins thickened, indistinctly waved, often subcrenulate; juvenile lamina 12-30 × 10-18 mm, spatulate, maroon, dark green mottled with maroon, undersides dull wine-red. Reticulations of lamina obscure above, usually distinct below. Male flower in dense glomerules, terminal on main and axillary branches; calyx-teeth linear, obtuse, ciliolate; corolla funnelform, lobes ovoid, acute, more or less = tube. Female flowers in clusters of 2-4; calyx-teeth obtuse, ciliolate; corolla-tube short, lobes long, acute. Drupe fleshy, 6-8 mm long, white, broad-oblong.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to Coprosma species of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

The juvenile plant is most likely to be confused with *Coprosma spathulata* subsp. *spathulata* as at this stage both species have spatulate leaves. Juvenile *Coprosma arborea* is most easily distinguished by running ones finger down a young branchlet. In this species the branchlet is smooth while in *C. spathulata* (both subspecies) the branchlet is finely rugose and so imparts a texture not unlike that of a cats tongue.

FLOWERING

September - December

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

FRUITING

January - December

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and semi-hardwood cuttings. Often rather slow growing. Does best planted in a moderately fertile, free draining soil in semi-shade, though once established it will tolerate extremely sunny and dry conditions. A beautiful specimen tree.

ETYMOLOGY

coprosma: From the Greek kopros 'dung' and osme 'smell', referring to the foul smell of the species, literally 'dung smell'

arborea: From the Latin arbor 'tree', meaning tree-like

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Peter J. de Lange (30 August 2004). Description adapted from Allan (1961)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I, Government Printer, Wellington.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Coprosma arborea* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/coprosma-arborea/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/coprosma-arborea/>