

Coprosma crenulata

SYNONYMS

Coprosma retusa (Hook. f.) Petrie

FAMILY

Rubiaceae

AUTHORITY

Coprosma crenulata W.R.B.Oliv.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

COPCRE

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low-growing sprawling yellowish shrub with small thick narrow pairs of leaves that have are finely notched towards the tip (lens needed) inhabiting upland areas of the South and Stewart Islands. Leaves curved, wider at tip which is dented inwards, smells faintly badly when crushed. Fruit bright red.

DISTRIBUTION

South and Stewart Islands. From western Nelson southwards.

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine 700-1400m, Often common yet rather inconspicuous in open subalpine scrub, mixed snow tussock-scrub and herbfield on permanently damp, often-peaty sites.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).



At Arthurs Pass, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Arthurs Pass, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Procumbent shrub up to 0.3 m high, with long trailing branches, bark light grey. Branchlets straw coloured, numerous, more or less tetragonous, pubescent. Leaves on short stout petioles. Stipules short, truncate, with 3 conspicuous denticles, ciliolate. Lamina thick, coriaceous, glabrous, on short stout petioles, obovate to obovate-oblong, retuse, cuneately narrowed to base, more or less 9-10 (-20) x 3-5 mm; margins thickened, minutely crenulate towards apex, slightly foetid smell when bruised. Midrib prominent below, impressed above. Flowers solitary, terminal. Male flower without calyx; corolla funnellform, approximately 6 mm long, tube approximately 4 mm long, lobes usually 5, ovate-triangular, acute; stamens usually 5. Female flower with minute calyx-teeth; corolla funnellform to tubular, cut halfway into 5 acute lobes. Drupe yellowish red, bright red, ovoid, approximately 6 mm long.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to Coprosma species of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

Coprosma aff. colensoi (*Coprosma* 'decipiens' in Landcare Coprosma Key) has leaves which are curved back at the tips but not indented, stipules each with a single denticle, and pendant flowers; it also lacks the minutely saw-edged margins towards the tip of each leaf characteristic of *C. crenulata*.

C. depressa has thinner, rounder leaves, and relatively large, whitish, papery stipules.

C. cheesemanii has much narrower, pointed, thinner leaves.

C. cuneata the leaves of are similar in shape to *C. crenulata*, but narrower, and are not as leathery; in addition, the bark is dark brown, and the stipules are triangular and hair-fringed, not 3-toothed and short as in *C. crenulata*.

FLOWERING

January-February

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

FRUITING

February-June (-September)

LIFE CYCLE

Fleshy drupes are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

ETYMOLOGY

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

crenulata: From the Latin crenus 'notch', meaning with notches which give a leaf margin the appearance of having small rounded teeth

TAXONOMIC NOTES

In Allan (1961) Oliver, places this sp. close to *C. serrulata* on account of "the peculiar crenulate edges to the leaves, the dentate stipules, and the flowers".

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Allan (1961), Mark (2012), Wilson & Galloway (1993).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Wellington: Government Printer. pg. 573-574.

Mark, A. F. 2012. Above the Treeline: A Nature Guide to Alpine New Zealand. Craig Potton Publishing, Nelson. pg. 170.

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.

Wilson, H. D., & Galloway, T. 1993. Small-leaved shrubs of New Zealand. Manuka Press. pg. 118-119.

MORE INFORMATION

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