

Coprosma pedicellata

SYNONYMS

Coprosma

FAMILY

Rubiaceae

AUTHORITY

Coprosma pedicellata Molloy, de Lange et B.D.Clarkson

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

COPPED

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: CD, DP, RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: CD, PD, RR

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: CD, PD, RR

2004 | Gradual Decline

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Bushy shrub with wide angled branches bearing abundant clusters of pairs of small oval leaves inhabiting wetlands in the east of New Zealand. Trunk often curved and orange underneath the bark. Leaves 5-10mm long, often with pale blotches. Fruit small, violet, hanging on a short stalk.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Largely confined to the eastern portion of the North and South Islands. In the North Island from Pehiri, near Gisborne to the Wairarapa, in the South Island from North Canterbury south to the Catlins and western portion of Southland.

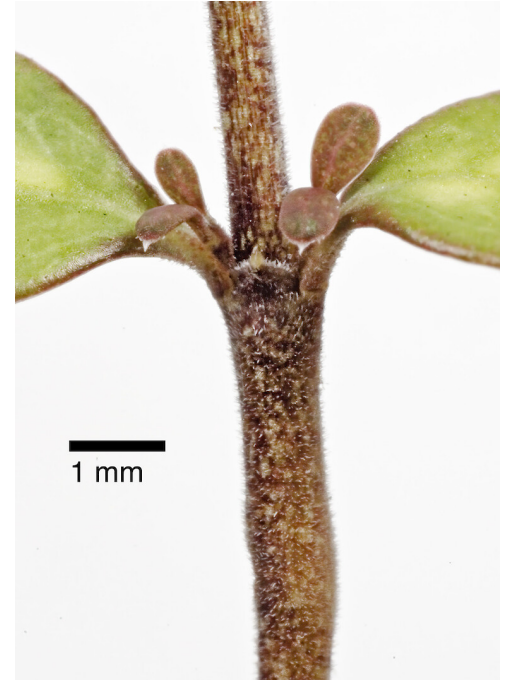
HABITAT

Kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*) dominated lowland alluvial forest. Often restricted to the margins of small oxbow lakes and ponds, or former stream/river channels. Very tolerant of waterlogging and plants may be found growing within water.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).



Stipule. In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 15/04/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Bark and leaves of mature plant, Dunsdale Picnic Area, Southland. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 28/02/2022, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrub or small tree up to 9m tall. Trunk erect to twisted, often leaning or twisted, bark brown or grey-brown, inner bark orange. Branches numerous, spreading, somewhat divaricating, and rather leafy. Adult leaves in opposite pairs, densely clustered on short shoots, lamina dull yellow-green and cream flecked, 10(-12) x 3-5(-7) mm, obovate to narrowly obovate, apex obtuse to retuse, domatia 0-2(-3). Interpetiolar stipules triangular, pubescent with a dark central denticle. Plants dioecious, flowers axillary, solitary or paired, pedicellate, pendulous, funnel-shaped, pedicels and calyces long persistent. Male flowers larger and more numerous than females. Corolla tube 2.5-3 mm, oblong, green suffused with purple, corolla lobes 3-5, cut to half tube length. Stamens prominent, 2-3(-4). Females flowers similar to males but with reduced corolla tubes, ovary ovoid, stigmas 2-3, 5 mm long. Fruit a globose dark purple to black drupe. Pyrenes (1-)2(-3), 3-4 x 2-3 mm.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to *Coprosma* species of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

Closest to *C. parviflora* var. *parviflora*, which is confined to forest and shrublands from Auckland to North Cape, and is never sympatric with *C. pedicellata*. However, frequently sympatric with *C. parviflora* var. *dumosa* (known as *C. sp. (t)*, *C. "tayloriae"* or by the nomen nuda *C. oliveri* and/or *C. tayloriae*), which has pale yellow underbark, somewhat flattened more strongly divaricating branches, and scarcely stalked drupes which are either opaque, white, lemon or pink.

FLOWERING

(August-)September-October (-November)

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Violet/Purple

FRUITING

(February-)March-September(-October). Fruit takes 12-14 months to ripen and so it is not uncommon to find ripe fruit and green fruit alongside flowers on the same plant.

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. Can be grown from semi-hardwood cuttings. Quite fast growing, doing best in fertile, moist alluvial soils but once established remarkably tolerant of a wide variety of soils and moisture regimes.

THREATS

Although not as threatened as was initially believed, this species is still extremely vulnerable to habitat loss from forest clearance, drainage, and other more subtle changes in local hydrology. Seedlings are very vulnerable to browsing from livestock. These animals can on occasion destroy subadults and adult specimens through bark stripping. Some populations comprise numerous adults, with no or little recruitment as a consequence of weeds which suppress seed germination.

ETYMOLOGY

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

pedicellata: With stalked clusters of florets

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/coprosma-pedicellata/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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