

Dracophyllum acerosum

SYNONYMS

Dracophyllum uniflorum var. *acicularifolium* Cheeseman; *Dracophyllum acicularifolium* (Cheeseman) Cockayne nom. illeg.; *Dracophyllum peninsulare* W.R.B.Oliv.

FAMILY

Ericaceae

AUTHORITY

Dracophyllum acerosum Bergg.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

DRAACE

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 26

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Upright, multi-branched, shrub or small tree of montane to subalpine shrubland and tussock grassland, bearing green, grass-like leaves, and white flowers borne singly on short terminal branches.

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine. On mountain slopes, ridgelines and hillsides, also along river or stream sides and on moraine terraces at elevations at the treeline, in subalpine shrubland, tussock grassland, grassland or herbfield. Often common in areas which have been burnt in the recent past.



Lake Lyndon, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Lake Lyndon, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect multi-stemmed shrub or small tree, 1–2 m tall. Bark on old branches grey to dark grey, smooth to finely fissured, young stems reddish brown. Leaves erect to spreading; lamina sheath 5–20 × 3.5–6.5 mm, coriaceous, striate, truncate to auricled and margin membranous, smooth or with the top half ciliate; lamina linear to linear-triangular, 30–190 × 0.7–1.5 mm, adaxial surface rugose, abaxial surface glabrous, slightly striated; margins serrulate with 14–21 teeth per 10 mm; apex triquetrous. Inflorescence a solitary terminal flower on lateral branchlets, sessile, shorter than leaves; flower bracts persistent, over-topping flowers, leaf like, ovate-lanceolate, 8.5–17.0 × 2.5–5.0 mm, surfaces glabrous with a tuft of scabrid hairs at apices, margins ciliate. Sepals lanceolate to narrowly ovate, 8.0–13.0 × 2.0–2.5 mm, shorter to equaling the corolla tube, adaxial surfaces with the top half pubescent; abaxial surfaces glabrous; margins ciliate; apices hard. Corolla white to light green turning yellowish; corolla tube cylindrical, 7.0–8.0 × 1.8–2.2 mm; corolla lobes reflexed, ovate-triangular to triangular, shorter than corolla tube, 1–3 × 1–2 mm; apices inflexed, subacute; surfaces glabrous. Stamens inserted on corolla tube in upper third, filaments 0.5–1.0 mm long; anthers included, rectangular, light yellow, 0.8–1.0 mm long. Ovary cylindrical, 2.2–3.0 × 1.3–1.7 mm; glabrous; nectary scales rectangular, 1.5–1.6 × 0.7–0.8 mm, apices retuse; style included, 1.3–1.5 mm long, glabrous; stigma capitate. Fruit sessile, light brown, 4.0–4.5 × 4.0–4.2 mm, oblong, apex round, glabrous. Seeds yellowish brown, ovoid, 1.45–1.5 mm long, testa slightly reticulate.

SIMILAR TAXA

Dracophyllum acerosum is somewhat similar to *D. kirkii* from which it differs in being erect-stemmed, many branched, and with adult leaves that are narrower (0.7–1.5 mm) and with the adaxial lamina surface rugose with fewer teeth per 10 mm (14–21) on the lamina margin. Also the leaf apex is distinctly triquetrous. The adaxial surface of the flower bract differs from that of *D. kirkii* in having a tuft of scabrid hairs at the apex. The sepals are longer (8–13 mm) with the top adaxial half pubescent. The corolla tube is longer (7–8 mm) with no apical ridge on the corolla lobes that is also glabrous on the adaxial surface. The ovary also differs that it is cylindrical. *Dracophyllum acerosum* is also similar to *D. uniflorum* var. *frondosum* from which it differs in lacking the prominent apical ridge on the petal and having a subacute corolla lobe apex. The margins of the flower bracts are ciliate not serrulate, while the nectary scales are longer (1.5–1.6 cf. 1.2–1.5 mm). The apex of the ovary of *D. acerosum* is round not truncate like that of *D. uniflorum* var. *frondosum* and the style is much shorter (1.3–1.5 cf. 3.0–4.0 mm).

FLOWERING

November – May

FRUITING

January - August

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - should not be removed from the wild

ETYMOLOGY

dracophyllum: Dragon leaf, from its likeness to the dragon tree of the Canary Islands

acerosum: From the Latin acus 'sharp', meaning sharp or pointed

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (6 April 2012). Description adapted from Venter (2009).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Venter, S. 2009: A taxonomic revision of the genus *Dracophyllum* Labill. (Ericaceae). Unpublished Phd Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Dracophyllum acerosum* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dracophyllum-acerosum/>