

Dracophyllum recurvum

COMMON NAME

curled leaved neinei

SYNONYMS

Dracophyllum rubrum Colenso; *Dracophyllum tenuicaulis* Colenso;
Dracophyllum brachyphyllum Colenso; *Dracophyllum brachycladum* Colenso

FAMILY

Ericaceae

AUTHORITY

Dracophyllum recurvum Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

DRAREC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 26

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing sprawling shrub bearing curved blue-green narrow pointed hairy leaves clustered towards the tip of twigs inhabiting mountains of the central North Island. Leaves 15-30mm long by 1-3mm wide, upper surface rough. Flowers white, in clusters of 5-8 at end of twigs.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Central Volcanic Plateau and adjacent mountains with an isolated occurrence in the Raukumara Range)

HABITAT

Montane to alpine. Common in open ground on mountain slopes, ridgelines, cliff faces or on plateau within subalpine shrubland, fellfield, grassland, herbfield or tussockland



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



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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Many-stemmed shrublet 0.1–0.9 m tall. Branches spreading, decumbent to prostrate and much-branched. Bark on old branches grey to dark grey, smooth, young stems reddish brown. Leaves spreading to mostly recurved, glaucous to light green. Lamina sheath 4.0–6.0 × 3.0–6.5 mm, striate, tapering to truncate and margin membranous, ciliate or only the top half ciliate; lamina 15–40 × 1–2 mm, linear to linear-triangular, adaxial surface rugose to scabrid, abaxial surface glabrous, slightly striated; margin serrulate with 90–120 teeth per 10 mm; apex thickened, obtuse and triquetrous. Inflorescence a terminal spike on lateral branchlets; over-topping leaves, erect, dense, 12–25 mm long, oblong. Flowers 5–8, sessile; inflorescence bracts over-topping flowers, light green to glaucous, 10.0–17.0 × 1.2–1.7 mm, ovate-lanceolate at base, surfaces rugose; margins serrulate; flower bract over-topping flowers, 6.5–9.0 × 4.0–4.5 mm, ovate, surfaces glabrous with a tuft of scabrid hairs at apex on adaxial surface; margins ciliate. Sepals 4.8–6.0 × 1.5–2.0 mm, lanceolate to ovate-lanceolate, equaling corolla tube, with the top half pubescent on adaxial surface; margins ciliate. Corolla white to occasionally light pink; corolla tube 4.0–4.5 × 1.7–2.0 mm, narrowly-campanulate, widened at mouth; corolla lobes reflexed, 1.3–1.7 × 1.4–1.5 mm, ovate-triangular to triangular, shorter than corolla tube; apex acute; adaxial surface papillate. Stamens inserted in middle of the corolla tube, filaments 0.19–0.2 mm long; anthers included, 0.8–1.2 mm long, oblong, initially pink turning light yellow. Ovary 1.5–2.0 × 1.9–2.0 mm, obovate; apex round; nectary scales 0.6–0.7 × 0.5–0.6 mm, rectangular, apices irregularly toothed; style included, 1.5–2.0 mm long, glabrous; stigma capitate. Fruit 3.0–4.0 × 2.8–3.0 mm, light brown, broadly obovoid, apex round, glabrous. Seeds 0.8–0.9 mm, yellowish brown, ovoid, testa slightly reticulate.

SIMILAR TAXA

Dracophyllum recurvum is a distinctive species which, within its indigenous North Island habitat is unlikely to be confused with any other associated *Dracophyllum*. The species is recognised by the rugose to scabrid adaxial leaf surface, triquetrous and keeled recurved leaf apices, flowers borne in short stout terminal racemes, very broad flower bracts, sepals equaling the corolla tube and by the narrowly campanulate corolla tube. Venter (2009) suggests it is most similar to the North-West Nelson endemic *Dracophyllum marmoricola* from which it differs mainly by having smooth bark, recurved leaves with more (90–120) teeth per 10 mm on the lamina margin. The flower bracts of *D. recurvum* are also longer than the flowers and the corolla tube is narrowly campanulate rather than cylindrical.

FLOWERING

December - April

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

February - May

LIFE CYCLE

Minute seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

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

recurvum: Recurved

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (16 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.

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/dracophyllum-recurvum/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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