

Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata

COMMON NAME

African olive

FAMILY

Oleaceae

AUTHORITY

Olea europaea subsp. *cuspidata* (Wall. ex G.Don) Cif.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial. It is light demanding so will be found in light gaps or at the forest edge (West, 1996). The plant grows in open coastal shrub and modified areas near native forest margins. The plant grows on inshore and offshore islands. A plant of open scrub, forest margins and coastlines.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dense bushy shrub or small tree to approx. 7m high; bark becoming rough. Shoots angular, lepidote when young. Leaves shortly petiolate. Lamina 5~11 x .8~2cm, lanceolate or narrow-elliptic, sparsely to densely lepidote beneath and appearing pale green or slightly silvery, dark green and lepidote or elepidote above; base attenuate; apex mucronate. Panicles axillary. Calyx 1~1.5mm long; lobes broad-triangular, glabrous or somewhat lepidote. Corolla lobes 3~4mm long, whitish, generally oblong, almost fleshy, patent at first, ultimately reflexed. Stamens slightly < corolla. Drupe 5~8mm diam., globose to broad-ovoid, glossy, becoming red and ultimately black. (- Webb et. al., 1988)

SIMILAR TAXA

A dense bushy tree or shrub that grows up to 7 m in height with scaly leaves, that are usually opposite, lanceolate or narrow-elliptic (rounded at both ends, widest in the middle) to 11 cm. The leaves are pale or slightly silvery beneath and dark green above. The flowers are small, 4-12 lobed and whitish. The stone fruit is round and from 5-8mm in diameter and a glossy green becoming red and then black.

FLOWERING

Dec-Jan

FLOWER COLOURS

White

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. The seed is dispersed by birds and possible possums.

YEAR NATURALISED

1956 (Raoul Island); 1961 (mainland NZ)

ORIGIN

E. Africa southwards to Cape Province South Africa.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Agricultural

ATTRIBUTION

Cameron, Ewen K 2017. Naturalised African olives (*Olea europaea* subsp. *cuspidata*) in New Zealand. Auckland Botanical Soc. Journal 72(1): 71-76.



MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/olea-europaea-subsp-cuspidata/>