

# Rubus squarrosus

## COMMON NAME

leafless lawyer, yellow-prickled lawyer

## SYNONYMS

*Rubus cissoides* var. *pauperatus* Kirk

## FAMILY

Rosaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Rubus squarrosus* Fritsch

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

RUBSQU

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Extremely prickly usually leafless (or nearly so) scrambling vine. Stems, petioles, petiolules and leaf midribs covered in conspicuous yellow prickles. Leaves usually much-reduced (sometimes absent) compound; leaflets 3-5, lanceolate, deeply toothed. Flowers white, in panicles up to 200 mm long. Fruit red to red-orange.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North and South Islands, from Ahipara south (scarce north of the Manawatu) and with the exception of Northland mainly easterly.

## HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Usually in open areas, particularly in dune-field, grey scrub and other shrubland; open forest, river beds, cliff faces, or on talus and boulder slopes.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from introduced *Rubus* (blackberries, raspberries wineberries etc) by the virtually hairless stems and branchlets, much-reduced leaves (so appearing at times leafless) and bright yellow prickles, as well as having smaller flowers and fruits.



Wellington south coast. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 24/10/1994, Licence: CC BY.



Wellington south coast. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/03/1994, Licence: CC BY.

## FLOWERING

October - December

## FLOWER COLOURS

Cream, White

## FRUITING

February - March

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from layered stems and semi-hardwood cuttings. An unusual and oddly attractive plant which does well in open, free draining soils, rockeries and also in places where it can grow through surrounding shrubs. Rather resilient it can tolerate some drought and frost. Despite its very prickly stems and leaves it is probably the most commonly grown New Zealand indigenous Rubus. The large yellow prickles and seemingly leafless growth habit are sufficiently unusual that it has proved popular in gardens. If planted in the right sites it is also an excellent deterrent, keeping out unwanted visitors and animals! As with most of the New Zealand native Rubus the fruits of this species though edible are small and insipid.

## THREATS

Not Threatened but often local and uncommon over large parts of its potential range. Some northern populations are very vulnerable to habitat destruction

## ETYMOLOGY

**rubus:** From the Latin meaning bramble

## WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from retail plant and specialist native plant nurseries.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (5 November 2016). Description based on Allan (1961), Webb et al. (1988) and Webb & Simpson (2001)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I, Wellington, Government Printer.

Webb CJ, Sykes WR, Garnock-Jones PJ 1988: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV. Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch.

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2001: Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons. Christchurch, Manuka Press.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): Rubus squarrosus Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/rubus-squarrosus/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/rubus-squarrosus/>