

Solanum laxum

COMMON NAME

potato vine

SYNONYMS

Solanum jasminoides

FAMILY

Solanaceae

AUTHORITY

Solanum laxum Spreng.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

High-climbing, usually hairless vine. Stems to 15 m long, semi-woody. Leaf stems to 3 cm long, slender, twining. Leaves alternate, 20–60 x 7–30 mm, thin to oval, occasionally with lobes at base. Flowers star-shaped, white or pale mauve with central yellow cone, 20–33 mm diameter, many and long-lasting in loose terminal clusters, Jan–Dec. Berries 4–6 mm diameter, shiny, dark blue-black, often absent.

SIMILAR TAXA

Can be confused with *Jasminum polyanthum* when not flowering. However *S. jasminoides* has alternate leaves. The potato-like flowers immediately place this vine in Solanaceae

FLOWERING

January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

YEAR NATURALISED

1958

ORIGIN

S Brazil

ETYMOLOGY

solanum: Derivation uncertain - possibly from the Latin word *sol*, meaning “sun,” referring to its status as a plant of the sun. Another possibility is that the root was *solare*, meaning “to soothe,” or *solamen*, meaning “a comfort,” which would refer to the soothing effects of the plant upon ingestion.



Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 29/06/2006, Licence: CC BY.



Solanum jasminoides. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

Reason For Introduction

Ornamental

Life Cycle Comments

Perennial.

Reproduction

Some of its spread is almost certainly vegetative. (DoC, 1998).

Dispersal

spread by birds (DoC, 1998).

ATTRIBUTION

Species name change from *S. jasminoides* to *S. laxum* by C C Ogle, 24 Oct 2019

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/solanum-laxum/>