

# Dichondra micrantha

## COMMON NAME

Mercury Bay weed

## FAMILY

Convolvulaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Dichondra micrantha* Urb.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## DISTRIBUTION

**North Island:** North. Auckland (Kawau Island) to Wellington; **South Island:** Christchurch.

## HABITAT

Widely planted as a lawn in warmer parts of New Zealand and in many places it has thrived and spread naturally to a limited extent.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial herb, with most parts densely hairy; hairs white,  $\pm$  appressed, forked. Stems stoloniferous, freely branching, purplish, forming extensive mats or low cushions to 5 cm high. Lf internodes 1-2 cm long; petioles erect or nearly so, to 6 cm long, short on very exposed stolons. Lamina (5)-10-30 mm diam., suborbicular to reniform, membranous, glabrous or nearly so and dull above, with appressed hairs below; veins raised beneath, not impressed above; base broad-cordate; apex rounded or slightly emarginate. Peduncles 5-15 mm long, bract very small and inconspicuous. Calyx c. 2 mm long, densely hairy outside; lobes alternately linear-oblong and ovate-oblong, obtuse to subacute. Corolla 4-5 mm diam., greenish white, lobed to c. 1/2 way; lobes narrow-oblong to lanceolate, = calyx lobes at anthesis, becoming > calyx lobes. Anthers violet or violet-margined. Ovary densely hairy. Capsule usually deeply 2-lobed, with 1-(2) seeds per loculus, 2-2.5  $\times$  4-5 mm, more rarely only 1 locule developed, indehiscent, slightly to strongly hispid, > calyx. Fruiting calyx to 3 mm long, fruiting peduncle recurved. Seeds c. 1.5 mm long, yellow to dark brown.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Disistinguished from the native *Dichondra* by the glabrous to glabrate leaves and the habit - found in urban lawns.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1978

## ORIGIN

West Indies, S. North America



In pavement, Mt Eden Auckland. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 02/10/2022, Licence: CC BY.



In pavement, Mt Eden Auckland. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 02/10/2022, Licence: CC BY.

## ETYMOLOGY

**dichondra:** Two seeds

**micrantha:** Tiny flower

This name may be incorrectly used for the exotic *Dichondra* in New Zealand. Previously referred to as the indigenous *D. repens*.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (3 October 2022). Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, and Features sections copied from Webb et al. (1988).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Webb C.J., Sykes W.R., & Garnock-Jones P.J. (1988). *Flora of New Zealand Volume 4*. DSIR, Botany Division.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dichondra-micrantha/>