

Ageratina riparia

COMMON NAMES

mist flower

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect or sprawling, many-stemmed herb to subshrub to 0.5-1.5 m. Perennial fibrous rootstock. Stems occ die back in winter, covered in purple-striped non-sticky hairs, usually purple, becoming woody, with branches in opposite pairs. Leaves in opposite pairs, 60-100 x 15-25 mm, willow-like, coarsely serrate except near base. Flowers small, white, 4-5 mm diam, in terminal clusters, Aug-Jan. Seeds black, 5-angled, 2 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinctive toothed leaves separate mistflower from Mexican devil

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Humid subtropical and tropical rainforests (W.T. Parsons & E.G. Cuthbertson 2001). In NZ, coastal, lowland (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Forest margin, damp banks and streamsides, slips (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). In Australia, shaded riverbanks, steep south facing hillsides in areas where annual rainfall exceeds 1700mm (W.T. Parsons & E.G. Cuthbertson 2001).

GENUS

Ageratina

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Ageratina riparia (Regel) R.M.King & H.Rob.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

August, September, October, November, December, January, February, March

FRUITING

June-September (W.T. Parsons & E.G. Cuthbertson 2001)

YEAR NATURALISED

1931



Ageratina riparia. Photographer: Graeme La Cock, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Ageratina riparia. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

ORIGIN

Mexico, W. Indies

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

Tolerant of deep shade and damp, damage and grazing, salt, most soils

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Reproduces by seed. Plants may re-grow following disturbance if roots (occasionally stems) contact ground. Drooping stems can layer in wet sites. Dispersed by wind, water, road mowing machines (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Many seeds produced (ibid.)

ETYMOLOGY

riparia: From the Latin ripa 'streambank or 'riverbank' and the suffix -aris which gives the sense 'belonging to' or 'resembling'. Riparia means growing on the banks of streams or rivers

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

NVS CODE

AGERIP

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ageratina-riparia/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026