

# Bryonia cretica subsp. dioica

## COMMON NAMES

white bryony

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Soft, summer-green, cucumber-like vine to 6 m tall, dying back in autumn to perennial tuber. Tubers brittle, branching, huge; branches 45-160 x 100- 800 cm, oriented vertical to horizontal. Stems arise from end of tuber, soft; with slender, coiling tendrils. Leaves to 15 x 15 cm, thin, 5-lobed, middle lobe longest. Flowers tubular, to 2 cm long, whitish with green stripes. Fruit round, 4-8 mm diam, smooth skinned, succulent, yellow turning red, many-seeded, 5-8 clustered.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Sicyos australis* (mawhai) (indigenous) has prickly 1-seeded fruits. *Tamus communis* (black Bryony) is also similar.

## HABITAT

Terrestrial. Disturbed and open forest and shrubland, stream edges

## GENUS

*Bryonia*

## FAMILY

Cucurbitaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Bryonia cretica* subsp. *dioica* (Jacq.) Tutin

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

December, January, February

## FRUITING

Jan-march

## YEAR NATURALISED

1991

## ORIGIN

Eurasia/Mediterranean

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental



Male flower, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 22/07/2013, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Makino Scenic Reserve, Rangitikei River. Jan 1998. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## TOLERANCES

Tolerates wet to seasonal drought, warm to cool, variety of soils, semi shade. Poisonous so not browsed.

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Spreads by seeds and vegetatively by tuber fragments. Many seeds contained within each fruit. Tuber fragments can spread via water, soil disturbance, garden refuse. Seed dispersed by birds.

## ETYMOLOGY

**dioica**: Two plants

## NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

**This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord.** The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

## 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](#).

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/bryonia-cretica-subsp-dioica/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026