

Caltha palustris

COMMON NAMES

Marsh marigold, king cup

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stout, perennial herb. Stems leafy, permanently erect, or sprawling with age and producing roots and shoots at nodes. Basal leaves: lamina 5-125 × 10-190 mm, yellow-green to green (often flushed with red), rounded to ovate, reniform, or cordate, margins entire or crenate to dentate. Inflorescences 1-7-flowered. Flowers 10-45 mm diameter; sepals yellow or orange, 6-25 mm. Follicles 5-25, spreading, sessile, ellipsoid; bodies 8.0-15.0 × 3.0-4.5 mm; style and stigma straight or curved, 0.5-2.0 mm. Seeds elliptic, 1.5-2.5 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

None that are naturalised in New Zealand

DISTRIBUTION

Naturalised exotic. Currently known from scattered sites in the Waikato, Wellington and Canterbury regions

HABITAT

An uncommon weed of lowland ponds, slow flowing streams and muddy ground. Commonly cultivated, whereby it sometimes spreads from gardens into nearby waterways

GENUS

Caltha

FAMILY

Ranunculaceae

AUTHORITY

Caltha palustris L.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

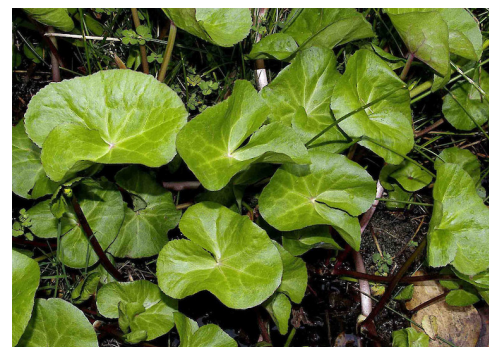
Throughout the year

FRUITING

Throughout the year



Caltha palustris, in cultivation. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Caltha palustris, in cultivation. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

YEAR NATURALISED

1999

ORIGIN

Europe

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces and daughter offsets, In New Zealand plants spread mostly by vegetative means although viable seed is produced and some seedlings have been seen in the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

caltha: From the Greek kalathos 'goblet', refers to the form of the flower

palustris: From the Latin palus 'swamp', meaning growing in swamps

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (28 March 2012). Description by P.J. de Lange.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/caltha-palustris/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026