

Canavalia rosea

COMMON NAMES

Canavalia

BIOSTATUS

Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL, SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial herb, procumbent and creeping or subscandent to lianoid. Stems up to 3 m, trailing, pubescent with appressed-pilose hairs when young. Leaflets 40–120 × 35–80 mm, dark green above, paler beneath, broad-obovate, broad elliptic, orbicular to obovate, apex rounded or emarginate, pilose-hairy when young, especially below, glabrescent. Inflorescences erect, racemose, few-flowered, peduncles stout, 50–300 mm long. Flowers clustered toward apex of rachis; pedicels 2–6 mm long. Calyx 8 mm long, upper lip 4 mm long, pilose. Petals dark pink; standard broadly elliptic-orbicular to orbicular, c.30 mm, rounded; wings and keel oblanceolate. Ovary silky-hairy; ovules c.7. Pods linear-oblong, initially dark green drying brownish-black, 70–140 × 25–30 mm, glabrescent, with a double rib dorsally and a single ventral rib. Seeds 15–20 mm, brown, often with dark markings, ellipsoid, somewhat flattened.

SIMILAR TAXA

None in New Zealand. A distinctive strand species which cannot be confused with any other plant growing in a similar habitat within the New Zealand Botanical Region.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. In New Zealand known only from the Kermadec Islands where it is not very common. Found throughout the warmer parts of the Pacific and Indian Oceans

HABITAT

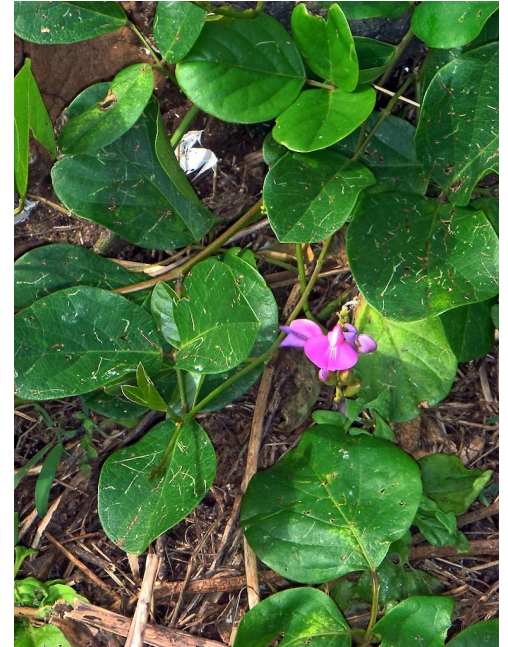
In New Zealand found on boulder beaches and sand dunes on the Kermadec Islands. This is a common beach strand plant of the Pacific Islands, where it usually grows with *Lepturus repens* (G.Forst.) R.Br., *Ipomoea pes-caprae* subsp. *brasiliensis* (L.) Ooststr., and *Vigna marina* (Burm.) Merr.

THREATS

Not threatened. However very uncommon reaching its world southern limit in the New Zealand Botanical Region. Because it occupies such a narrow geographic area it is listed as Range Restricted.

GENUS

Canavalia



Napier Island, Kermadec Islands. May 2011.
Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.



South Meyer Island, Kermadec Islands.
Kermadec petrel. May 2011. Photographer:
Peter J de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FAMILY

Fabaceae

AUTHORITY

Canavalia rosea DC.

SYNONYMS

Canavalia maritima Thouars, Canavalia obtusifolius (Lam.) DC.

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Throughout the year

FRUITING

Throughout the year

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seeds are dispersed by water (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. However extremely cold sensitive. Various attempts to cultivate it in New Zealand have so far failed because plants die during the winter months.

ETYMOLOGY

canavalia: This is a latinized form of kanavali a Malabar vernacular and the name for this genus of climbing herbs.

NVS CODE

CANROS

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 22

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL, SO

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL, SO

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DC, SO, OL

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on herbarium specimens held at AK and observations of cultivated material and plants seen in the wild on Raoul, Norfolk and Rarotonga.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/canavalia-rosea/>

PDF DATE

06 June 2026