Carmichaelia monroi

COMMON NAMES
stout dwarf broom

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, RF
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION
Rare, very low-growing leafless shrub consisting of erect flattened yellow-green branches with a blunt orange or red tip. Branches 3–5mm wide, grooved, blunt-tipped. Flowers pea-like, pink with dark purple centre, base hairy, in clusters. Fruit a dry pod with hard seeds and which do not split open.

FLOWER COLOURS
Violet/Purple, White

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Rachael Range. Photographer: Gillian M. Crowcroft, Licence: All rights reserved.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dwarf, spreading shrub, up to 0.15–0.25 × 0.40–1.00 m. **Branches** stout, ascending and horizontal, 10–35 mm diameter. **Cladodes** linear, striate, compressed, erect to spreading, green to green-bronze, often hairy when young, glabrous at maturity, 22–75 × 2–6 mm; apex obtuse, yellow, green, bronze, or red; leaf nodes 2–4. **Leaves** simple, oblanceolate, fleshy, green to green-bronze, present on seedlings and occasionally mature plants, 5.0–8.0 × 2.0–4.5 mm; both surfaces with scattered hairs; apex emarginate to retuse; base cuneate; petiole glabrous or sparsely hairy, 1.5–2 mm long. Leaves on cladodes reduced to a scale, broadly triangular, glabrous, 0.5–0.6 × 0.9–1.1 mm; apex obtuse. **Stipules** free, broad-triangular, 0.25–0.40 × 0.75–0.90 mm; upper surface glabrous; lower surface hairy, becoming glabrous with age; apex subacute; margin hairy. **Inflorescence** a raceme 1–2 per node, each with 1–3 flowers. **Peduncle** hairy, green, 6–8 mm long. **Bracts** triangular, glabrous, pale green to tan, < 0.5 mm long; apex acute; margin hairy. **Pedicel** hairy, pale green, 3–4 mm long. **Bracteoles at base of calyx** sometimes absent, glabrous, < 0.4 mm long; apex subacute; margin hairy. **Calyx** campanulate, 2.5–3.0 × c. 2.0 mm; inner surface glabrous, green; outer surface hairy, green. **Calyx lobes** triangular, green and often flushed red, < 1 mm long; outer surface densely hairy; apex acute, often black; margin hairy. **Standard** obovate, patent when young, reflexed at maturity, positioned at proximal area of keel, keeled, 6-7 × 5-6 mm; distal and central areas of upper surface purple, proximal area pale green, margins white, sometimes purple-veined; distal and central area of lower surface white, proximal area pale green, sometimes purple-veined; apex retuse; margins recurved; claw pale green, c. 3 mm long. **Wings** oblong, shorter than keel, 7–8 × c. 2 mm; distal and central areas of adaxial surface purple, proximal area green; distal and central areas of abaxial surface white, proximal area pale green; auricle triangular, pale green, apex subacute, c. 1 mm long; claw pale green, c. 2 mm long. **Keel** 8.5–10.0 × 3.0–4.0 mm; distal and central areas of upper surface purple, proximal area pale green; auricle triangular, pale green, with subacute apex, c. 1.5 mm long; claw pale green, 3.0–3.5 mm long. **Stamens** 8.5–10.0 mm long; lower filaments connate for c. ≣ length and outside filaments free for 2.5–3.5 mm. **Pistil** slightly exserted beyond stamens, 8.5–11.0 mm long; style bearded on upper surface; ovary weakly falcate, glabrous; ovules 11–12. **Pod** oblong or oblanceolate, laterally compressed, often weakly falcate, brown, dark brown, or black, usually indehiscent, 11.0–15.0 × 3.5–5.5 mm; beak on adaxial suture, stout, pungent, < 1 mm long. **Seeds** oblong-reniform, 3–11 per pod, dull yellow or orange, brown-green, or olive green, often with black mottling, 2.0–2.5 × 1.5–2.0 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

C. monroi is similar to *C. astonii* G.Simpson and *C. vexillata* Heenan. From *C. astonii* it is distinguished by its smaller habit, cladodes, and flowers; and from *C. vexillata* by the triangular or broad-triangular stipules.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Marlborough and Canterbury).

HABITAT

Inhabiting stable slopes, terraces, eyots within braided river; also amongst loose rock, scree debris, and eroding soils at the interface between rock outcrops and unstable scree and the adjacent tussock and shrub vegetation.

GENUS

Carmichaelia

FAMILY

Fabaceae

AUTHORITY

Carmichaelia monroi Hook.f.

SYNONYMS

Carmichaelia monroi var. longecarinata G.Simpson

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING
November–January

FRUITING
December–May

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Seeds are possibly dispersed by wind and granivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from seed and hardwood cuttings. A beautiful shrub, which deserves wider cultivation.

WHERE TO BUY
Not Commercially available.

ETYMOLOGY
carmichaelia: After Carmichael, a botanist
monroi: Named after Sir David Monro who was a 19th century New Zealand politician

NVS CODE
CRMMON

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 32

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Otago: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Critical | Qualifiers: NR, RF, Sp Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Heenan PB. 1995. A taxonomic revision of Carmichaelia (Fabaceae - Galegeae) in New Zealand (part I). *New Zealand Journal of Botany 33(4)*: 455–475. https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1995.10410618.
Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 11*: 285–309. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001.

ATTRIBUTION
Description adapted from Heenan (1995).

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carmichaelia-monroi/

PDF DATE
09 July 2026