

Cobaea scandens

COMMON NAME

cathedral bells

FAMILY

Polemoniaceae

AUTHORITY

Cobaea scandens Cav.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

COBSCA

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Potential to become a major weed in tall and undisturbed forests, natural open areas, scrub, forest remnants, hedgerows, roadsides, riverbanks, gardens, shelterbelts and undisturbed native forests (ARC, PestFacts)

FEATURES

Evergreen, climbing vine to 6 m. Stems angled, branch tips hook-like. Leaves alternate, usually in 3 pairs of leaflets (incl small basal pair). Leaflets oval, 4-12 x 2-5 cm, dark green above, whitish below; with branched, purplish when young, woody-at-base tendrils. Mid-rib has twining tendrils. Flowers bell shaped, 6-7 cm long, green and smelly when young, becoming deep purple, Dec-May. Seed capsule 55-85 mm long, with 10-15 mm winged seeds.

SIMILAR TAXA

This vine has distinctive large, round, purple lantern-like flowers, found on twining purplish stems. The fruit are large and oval from 6 to 10cm long, releasing winged seeds.

FLOWERING

(August) September - May

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Violet/Purple

FRUITING

September-May

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial

YEAR NATURALISED

1946

ORIGIN

Central & South America

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental



Cobaea scandens. Photographer: Department of Conservation - BIOWEB database



Wanganui. Photographer: Colin Ogle

ETYMOLOGY

cobaea: Named by the Spanish botanist Antonio José Cavanilles (1745-1804) after the Spanish missionary and naturalist Bernabé Cobo (1582-1657)

scandens: Climbing; from the Latin scandere; growth habit

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cobaea-scandens/>