

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

COBSA

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

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)

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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



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REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

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

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](#).

MORE INFORMATION

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