

# Coprosma brunnea

## COMMON NAME

Coprosma

## SYNONYMS

*Coprosma acerosa* f. *brunnea* Kirk

## FAMILY

Rubiaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Coprosma brunnea* (Kirk) Cockayne ex Cheeseman

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

COPBRU

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | At Risk – Declining

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Data Deficient

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Sprawling yellowish small-leaved shrub inhabiting inland open rocky areas. Twigs pale orange, slightly fuzzy at tip. Leaves narrow, small, with dark line down middle on the underside, in clusters of pairs scattered along twigs. Flowers tiny, with long protruding threads. Fruit streaked purple.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island only where mainly eastern.

## HABITAT

A species of inland river beds, moraines, and less commonly gravel and cobble beaches

## FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed, semi-hardwood cuttings and rooted pieces. Prefers free draining soil in a sunny position. Most nursery stock sold over the last few decades as this species is not *C. brunnea* but an allied segregate of *C. acerosa* endemic to the Central Volcanic Plateau of the North Island.



Hooker valley, December. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Hooker valley, December. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

## THREATS

Not Threatened. However, it can be uncommon over large parts of its range, and is often heavily browsed by rabbits and hares.

## ETYMOLOGY

**coprosma:** From the Greek kopros 'dung' and osme 'smell', referring to the foul smell of the species, literally 'dung smell'

**brunnea:** From the Latin brunneus 'deep brown'

## WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally offered by retail plant and specialist native plant nurseries.

## NOTES ON TAXONOMY

*Coprosma brunnea* is part of the *C. acerosa* A.Cunn. complex, and many botanists prefer to regard it as either *C. acerosa* or a form of it. However, *C. brunnea* has been found growing sympatrically with *C. acerosa*, and remaining distinct from it, while nrDNA ITS and ETS sequences show that *C. acerosa* is a complex aggregate of at least 6 lineages (*C. brunnea* is one of these), and there are subtle morphological characters to support these lineages. Therefore until further research is conducted into this problem NZPCN think it better to retain *C. brunnea* at the rank of species.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/coprosma-brunnea/>