

# Coprosma depressa

## SYNONYMS

*Coprosma ramulosa* Petrie, *Coprosma pubens* Petrie

## FAMILY

Rubiaceae

## AUTHORITY

Colenso ex Hook.f.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

COPDEP

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Flattened low-growing sprawling small-leaved shrub of open upland areas. Leaves narrow, 5-9mm long, in clusters of pairs, tip curled under and with very small hairs (lens needed), leaf pairs joined at base with a thin very short fringed thin sheath. Fruit red.

## DISTRIBUTION

North, South and Stewart Islands. Widespread from Hikurangi southwards.

## HABITAT

Montane to Low Alpine, 600-1300 m. On well-drained or rocky sites, often trailing over or around boulders.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Prostrate up to 0.3 m (usually less), with long slender rooting, criss-crossing, branches. Branchlets finely pubescent. Leaves fresh green, on petioles 2-4 mm long. Stipules rather large, pale, long-triangular, more or less pubescent, ciliate; sheath short, whitish. Lamina coriaceous, broad-ovate, obtuse to subobtuse, (5-) 7-9 x 1-3 (-5) mm. Midrib and usually a few secondary veins evident, at least below, apex blunt and turned down. Flowers solitary, terminal on short branchlets. Male flower without calyx; corolla funnelform, lobes acutely ovate, more or less equal to tube. Female flower with narrow-triangular, acute calyx-teeth; corolla with narrow-triangular acute lobes. Drupe bright red occasionally orange-red, globose, 5-6 mm diameter.

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to \*Coprosma\* species of New Zealand](#)



At Arthurs Pass. January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Arthurs Pass. January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## SIMILAR TAXA

In general, no other species has both a low sprawling habit and large whitish stipules.

*Coprosma crenulata* has glossier, larger, more leathery leaves with more obviously indented leaf tips, and short, thick, denticle-tipped stipules.

Other species which may sprawl in similar fashion (*C. cheesemanii*, *C. cuneata*) have much narrower leaves.

## FLOWERING

December

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green

## FRUITING

January-March

## LIFE CYCLE

Fleshy drupes are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## ETYMOLOGY

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

**depressa:** From the Latin depremere 'to press down', meaning to be flattened vertically, often referring to a plant's habit

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

In Allan (1961) it is noted that when Wild and Zotov record their observations "on the incidence of abnormal, irregular, and the hermaphrodite flowers ... assuming always that the normal plant is dioecious." Comparatively slight irregularities were found in *Coprosma depressa*.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Allan (1961), Mark (2012), Wilson & Galloway (1993).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Wellington: Government Printer. pg. 569, 587.

Mark, A. F. 2012. Above the Treeline: A Nature Guide to Alpine New Zealand. Craig Potton Publishing, Nelson. pg. 169.

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 11: 285-309.

Wilson, H. D., & Galloway, T. 1993. Small-leaved shrubs of New Zealand. Manuka Press. pg. 116-118.

## MORE INFORMATION

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