**Coprosma foetidissima**

**COMMON NAME**
hūpiro, stinkwood, shit shrub

**FAMILY**
Rubiaceae

**AUTHORITY**

**FLORA CATEGORY**
Vascular – Native

**ENDEMIC TAXON**
Yes

**ENDEMIC GENUS**
No

**ENDEMIC FAMILY**
No

**STRUCTURAL CLASS**
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

**NVS CODE**
COPFOE

**CHROMOSOME NUMBER**
2n = 132

**CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS**
2012 | Not Threatened

**PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES**
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION**
Shrub with pairs of thin pale green leaves that smell strongly of dung when crushed. Leaves 1-2cm long, veins not easily seen on the underside, widest at middle and gradually tapering to tip and base, small dark teeth between the bases of the leaf pairs. Fruits yellow or orange.

**DISTRIBUTION**
Endemic. North, South, Stewart and Auckland Islands. Occurs from Moehau in North Island southwards.

**HABITAT**
Occurs in coastal to subalpine forest, shrubland and occasionally grasslands.

**FEATURES**
Shrub or tree up to 3 m tall (can reach 6m occasionally). Open-branched with branches rather brittle. The bark is dark brown; branchlets are glabrous. Leaves are foetid (smelly) when bruised or crushed, and occur on slender narrowly winged petioles 8 - 15 mm. long. Stipules are truncate (see image), but produced into a usually conspicuous long denticle; ciliolate, with tufts of unequal hairs at tips. Lamina membranaceous to subcoriaceous, obovate to oblong to broadly ovate, obtuse, apiculate to mucronulate, 30-50 x 14-20 mm. Reticulations of veins evident, at least below. Flowers are solitary and terminal on branchlets. The drupe is pale to full orange, oblong and 7-10 mm and tases horrible. long. For more information see full Flora description below.
SIMILAR TAXA
Stunted forms of C. foetidissima may be confused with C. colensoi but the former can be distinguished by the smell of rotten eggs which is given off when the leaves are crushed. Also the fruit is not flecked with darker red.

FLOWERING
October - November

FRUITING
March - July

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’
foetidissima: Vile smelling

TAXANOMIC NOTES
This is the type species of the genus Coprosma J.R. Forst. et G. Forst.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION
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MORE INFORMATION