

# Coprosma fowerakeri

## COMMON NAMES

Foweraker's coprosma

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

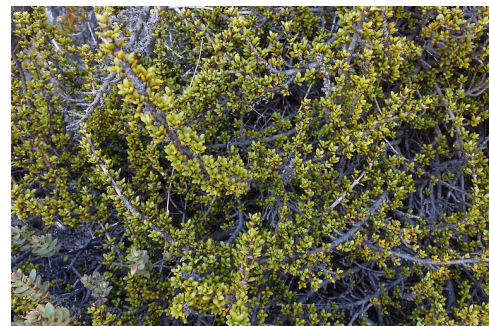
Low-growing shrub with wide-angled curved branches bearing small thick narrow dark green or leaves inhabiting mountainous areas of the South Island. Leaves pointed, curved, in clusters of pairs. A few small dark teeth on stem between leaf pairs. Fruit orange.

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow



Minaret Burn, in fruit, March. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Coprosma fowerakeri, Ahuriri Conservation Park. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 14/01/2020, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Decumbent, prostrate, to semi-erect, evergreen, dioecious shrub up to 0.60 m tall, with numerous, spreading, long-trailing branches up to 1(-2) m long and 15 mm diam.; these frequently rooting on contact with soil. Main stems 2-5(-8), decumbent; lateral branches decussate, numerous, stout, markedly recurved, rarely straight. Mature outer bark grey to dark silver-grey; inner bark dark green. Brachyblasts numerous and very leafy, arising in tightly but evenly spaced pairs along stem, leafy, internodes 0.1- 0.2 mm, scarcely visible, being + or - obscured by leaves and/or stipules. Leaves glabrous, opposite, densely clustered on short shoots; petioles 0.2-1 mm, stout, lamina 5-7(-10) x 1-3(-5) mm, markedly involute, oblanceolate to elliptic, fleshy-coriaceous to almost succulent, glabrous, margins entire, smooth, apex acute to subacute, base cuneate to attenuate, dark green to bronze-green, sometimes yellow-green; domatia absent; midrib and lateral veins not or hardly apparent on either surface. Stipules 0.3-1.0 mm long, shortly sheathing, chartaceous, glabrous except for densely ciliate distal portion; apex margin entire or bifid; hairs of distal portion flexuous, initially pale yellow fading to white; associated glandular denticles 2-6, evenly spaced, black, deciduous. Flowers axillary, located in axils of uppermost leaves of previous season's growth flush, solitary or paired. Male flowers larger than female flowers. Pedicels 0.15-0.20 mm long, sparsely hairy, maroon, spotted yellow-green, each with a basal, tubular, connate bracteole; bracteoles c. 0.5-0.6 mm long, lobes obovate-oblong, dark green, glabrous. Calyx reduced, pale green, lobes 4, obovate-oblong, basal portion green fading to pale green in distal third; margins + or - glabrous, rarely eglandular ciliate near the apex. Corolla 5-6 mm long; tube 1-1.5 mm long, funnelform; basal portion green, remainder green-yellow, with margins usually pigmented dark-red to purple; lobes 4, broadly lanceolate to ovate-acute, 3.5-4 x 1.5-2 mm, recurved, minutely papillose at apex and on inside. Stamens 4. Filaments 5; 6 mm long, pale green or green-yellow. Anthers 2.5-3 x 1-1.5 mm, ovate, elliptic to + or - rhomboid; pollen yellow. Female flowers with pedicels similar to male flowers. Calyx much reduced, 4-lobed, adnate to ovary. Corolla tube 2-2.5 mm long, narrowly funnelform, green-yellow with margins pale pink, vinous or purple in distal portion; corolla lobes 4, lanceolate-ovate 0.50 x 0.25 mm, recurved, minutely papillose-pubescent at apex and on inside. Ovary ovoid, 2-locular, green. Style branches 2, 6-9 mm long, terete, at first straight then recurving slightly in upper third, twisting markedly on drying, papillose-pubescent; stigmatic hairs 0.1 mm long, pale green to yellow. Drupes globose to subglobose; 4-5(-6) x 3-5(-6) mm bright orange, red or yellow; calyx lobes persistent as a central 0.5-1 mm stub. Pyrenes (1-)2, unequal, when two then the larger (2.5)-3-(4.5) x (1.8-)-2.0(-2.8) mm, ovate-elliptic to oblong-elliptic; plano-convex, roughened on the inner face; operculum usually indistinct, c. 1/3 of pyrene length.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Differs from *Coprosma pseudocuneata* by the smaller, decumbent, long-trailing growth form, numerous, stout, recurved, lateral branches, numerous short, stout very leafy brachyblasts, coriaceous involute leaves, shortly sheathing conspicuously denticulate stipules, and tetraploid chromosome number.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island

## HABITAT

Subalpine to alpine, usually within boulder falls and at the base of scree.

## GENUS

*Coprosma*

## FAMILY

Rubiaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Coprosma fowerakeri* D.A.Norton et de Lange

## SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2003)

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

December - March

## FRUITING

December - May

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and cuttings but rather slow.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

## NVS CODE

COPFOW

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 88

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened [Help](#)

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Norton, D.A.; de Lange, P.J. 2003: A new species of Coprosma (Rubiaceae) from the South Island, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 41: 223-231.

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

## ATTRIBUTION

Description based on: Norton and de Lange (2003)

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): Coprosma fowerakeri Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/coprosma-fowerakeri/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026