

Coprosma niphophila

COMMON NAMES

creeping coprosma

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Dwarf low-growing sprawling shrub forming patches to 60cm in diameter with erect pairs of narrow small hairless leaves inhabiting open upland areas of the South Island. Leaves 4-5mm long, sometimes red tipped. Small black tipped tooth on stem between leaf bases. Fruit orange or red.

FLOWER COLOURS

Green

GENUS

Coprosma

FAMILY

Rubiaceae

AUTHORITY

Coprosma niphophila Orchard

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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'

niphophila: Lover of snow

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

NVS CODE

COPNIP

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 132



Pisa range, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



At Pisa range, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

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

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

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

27 May 2026