

Coprosma petriei

COMMON NAMES

Turfy 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

Dwarf low-growing sprawling shrub forming patches to several metres in diameter with erect pairs of narrow small leaves with tiny hairs on the upper surface inhabiting open upland areas. Leaves 5-10mm long. Small group of hairs on stem between leaf bases. Fruit blueish.

FLOWER COLOURS

Green

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Subshrub forming dense low mats or cushions up to more or less 2 m across, usually smaller. Branches creeping and rooting, bark dark brown; branchlets slender, pubescent. Leaves densely crowded, sessile or subsessile, usually fascicled on short branchlets. Stipules rather broadly triangular, subacute, sheathing, pubescent, ciliolate. Lamina coriaceous, dark green above, paler below, more or less pubescent (excluding apex), narrowly elliptic to obovate to oblong, cuneately narrowed to base, acute, (3-) 5 (-10) x 1-3 mm; margins entire. Midrib alone evident or obscure. Flowers greenish; male flower solitary, terminal, more or less 20 mm long, filaments lengthening at anthesis; calyx obsolete or vestigial; corolla funnelform, lobes acute or subacute; female flower solitary, terminal; calyx-teeth narrow-triangular; corolla tubular, short. Drupes pale blue, globose, 6-8 mm diameter.

SIMILAR TAXA

Coprosma atropurpurea has dark magenta fruit when ripe; generally darker coloured foliage; weft of hairs on leaf apex.

DISTRIBUTION

North & South Islands. North - On the Volcanic Plateau; South - Widespread but often local in the eastern side as far south as Otago.

HABITAT

Montane to Subalpine. 700-1500 m. Often common on open, well-drained or rocky sites in tussock grassland or on moraine or gravel river flats, where it may form extensive mats.

GENUS

Coprosma

FAMILY

Rubiaceae



Pisa Range, in fruit. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Enys Scientific Reserve, Castle Hill. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 10/11/2016, Licence: CC BY-NC.

AUTHORITY

Coprosma petriei Cheeseman

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September-December

FRUITING

January-May (-September)

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'

petriei: Named after Donald Petrie (1846 -1925), Scottish born Otago botanist

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

NVS CODE

COPPET

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

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 | Qualifiers: TL 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

Allan, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Wellington: Government Printer. pg. 566.

Mark, A. F. 2012. Above the Treeline: A Nature Guide to Alpine New Zealand. Craig Potton Publishing, Nelson. pg. 167-168.

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 adapted by M. Ward from Allan (1961) and Mark (2012).

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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