

Coprosma propinqua var. martinii

COMMON NAME

Tāpātāpā

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Rubiaceae

AUTHORITY

Coprosma propinqua var. *martinii* W.R.B.Oliv.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

COPPVM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE

2004 | Range Restricted

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low growing or erect shrub bearing pairs of narrow leaves inhabiting the Chatham Islands. Branching at narrow angle, twigs fuzzy. Leaves dark green, 15-20mm long by 3-4mm wide, with small pits on underside. Fruit dark purple, slightly narrower around middle.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic, Rēkohu (Chatham), Rangihau (Pitt), Hokorereoro (South-east) Islands.

HABITAT

A locally common, sometimes abundant tall shrub or small tree of stream sides, swamp forest and the margins of peat bogs.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).





Male flowers (mostly spent) on shrub growing near North Road, Rēkohu (Chatham Island).
Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Date taken: 21/09/2019, Licence: CC BY.



Shrub showing upright densely leafy branches typical of this variety. Harold Peirce Memorial Scenic Reserve, Waitangi West, Rēkohu (Chatham Island). Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Date taken: 28/01/2018, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tall dioecious shrub or small tree up to 8 m tall. Under bark orange. Branches erect, ascending, virgate, branchlets copiously invested in patent to appressed hairs. Leaves opposite, often in fascicles of 4, glabrous, erecto-patent at first then spreading, often weakly arched; borne on short, puberulent, dark maroon, to violet-tinged petioles 1-2 mm long. Stipules shortly sheathing, base sparsely ciliate, denticle 1, if present prominent, though often vestigial or absent, sheath margins hyaline, central portion usually darkly vinous or maroon pigmented. Lamina 15-18(-20) × 4(-6) mm, lanceolate often broadly so, acute to subacute, coriaceous, adaxially yellow-green to green, abaxially paler, midrib evident adaxially and abaxially, side veins in 3-54 pairs, domatia 3(-4) often evident as prominent bulges on adaxial leaf surface, less conspicuous on abaxial.  flowers usually paired 2(-4), borne on 4(-10) mm long, darkly pigmented, puberulent brachyblasts, bearing reduced stipules and sometimes vestigial leaves; calyx minutely toothed, puberulent, maroon or dark green, spotted maroon, corolla shortly, narrowly funnelform, lobes > tube, broadly deltoid, acute, upper third decurved, abaxially dark green heavily spotted vinous red or maroon.  flowers solitary, terminal, borne on 3(-6) mm long brachyblasts covered in sheathing vestigial stipules and leaves; calyx minutely toothed, puberulent, greenish often spotted maroon, corolla minute, very shortly funnelform, lobes narrowly oblong, acute, usually curled completely back, adaxial surface red-green or pink, abaxially green, often spotted red, stigmas 2, 6-10 mm long, terete, white, densely papillose-pubescent. Drupe (6-)8(-10) × (5-)6-9 mm obconic, ± didymous, white, or white stippled with violet / dark blue flecks; calyx persistent. Pyrenes 2, ± equal.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to *Coprosma* species of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

Of those *Coprosma* on the Chatham Islands *Coprosma propinqua* var. *martinii* is easily recognised by the upright tall shrub to tree growth habit, narrow, lanceolate leaves, and distinctive obconic fruits. In the northern part of Rēkohu (Chatham Island) *Coprosma propinqua* var. *martinii* grows with *C. propinqua* var. *propinqua*. From the Chatham Islands race of *Coprosma propinqua* var. *propinqua*, *C. propinqua* var. *martinii* differs by taller arborescent growth habit, by having erect spreading rather than interlacing branchlets, wider and often shorter leaves, and obconic, weakly didymous white or white-blue-flecked rather than dark blue to violet ellipsoid fruits (as is the case with the Chathams race of *Coprosma propinqua* var. *propinqua*). In the sand country in open moor and heathland and on coastal cliffs there is a third *Coprosma* allied to *C. propinqua* var. *martinii*, *C. propinqua* var. *latiuscula*, which differs by its prostrate, scrambling growth habit, and shorter, wider leaves.

FLOWER COLOURS

Green

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Very easy from cuttings, fresh seed and rooted pieces. There are two forms, one forms a small tree, and this corresponds to the type variety. It is rarely grown in New Zealand, and virtually never seen sold by retail nurseries, the other form is flat and creeping, and is widely sold as *Coprosma* cv. Taiko. Both forms occur throughout the Chatham Islands, though the flat form is more common in sand dunes and the other in forest, peat bog and along lake margins

THREATS

An island endemic, and perhaps one of the few Chatham Island endemics which is still very common on all the main islands. It is considered Range Restricted only by virtue of the small geographic area it occupies

ETYMOLOGY

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

propinqua: From the Latin propinquus 'near, neighbouring', meaning closely related to another species

martinii: After William Martin a New Zealand botanist and lichenologist (23 October 1886, died 1975)

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 28 April 2022. Description by P.J. de Lange (27 April 2022) using fresh specimens and herbarium material.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/coprosma-propinqua-var-martinii/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/coprosma-propinqua-var-martinii/>