# Discaria toumatou

# **COMMON NAME**

matagouri, tūmatakuru

### **SYNONYMS**

None

### **FAMILY**

Rhamnaceae

### **AUTHORITY**

Discaria toumatou Raoul

### **FLORA CATEGORY**

Vascular - Native

# **ENDEMIC TAXON**

Yes

### **ENDEMIC GENUS**

No

# **ENDEMIC FAMILY**

No

### STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

# **NVS CODE**

**DISTOU** 

### **CHROMOSOME NUMBER**

2n = 22

### **CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS**

2017 At Risk - Declining

# **PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES**

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

# **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

Spiky grey shrub with many zig-zagging long flexible twigs bearing long (up to 5cm long) green spines interspersed with small oval dark green leaves. Bark rough, broken into squares. Leaves 10–20mm long. Flowers small, white, inconspicuous. Fruit a dry, 3 sided capsule.

# **DISTRIBUTION**

Endemic. North Island (from near Waiuku south to the southern Wairarapa and Wellington coastline; very uncommon), South Island (mainly east of the main divide, appearing to avoid areas of high rainfall).

# **WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING**

**UPL:** Obligate Upland

Rarely is a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands (non-wetlands).

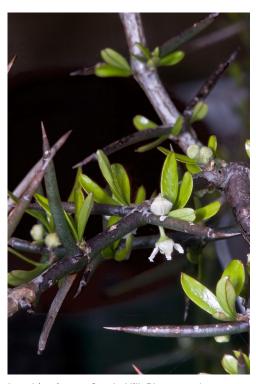
# **FLOWER COLOURS**

White





Danseys pass, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



In cultivation ex Castle Hill. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 04/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.

### LIFE CYCLE

Seeds are dispersed by ballistic projection and water (Thorsen et al., 2009).

### **PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE**

Easy from seed. Can be grown from cuttings but these can be slow to strike. Rather variable, and some North Island sand dune forms are entirely prostrate, forming trailing shrubs. An excellent hedge plant, with the added bonus that this species fixes atmospheric nitrogen, making it available for other plants.

### **THREATS**

Although abundant and probably stable in much of its South Island range, *Discaria toumatou* has become very uncommon and is under threat throughout the North Island, where it is now known from very few sites and viable populations. Reasons for the decline are not specified but loss of habitat is likely to be a major factor.

# **ETYMOLOGY**

discaria: Disc bearing

toumatou: Derived from the Maori name tumamatakuru.

#### WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Chrystall L. 1976. Further record of matagouri in the North Island. Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin 39: 47.

Duguid F. 1976. Matagouri at Herbertville. Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin 39: 45.

Elder NL. 1966. Matagouri in the North Island. Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin 33: 5.

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Moorfield JC. 2005. Te Aka: Māori-English, English-Māori dictionary and index. Longman/Pearson Education, Auckland, NZ. 357 p.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001.

# **MORE INFORMATION**

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/discaria-toumatou/