Discaria toumatou

COMMON NAME
Matagouri

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
2018 | 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 and South Islands. In the North Island known from near Waiuku south to the southern Wairarapa and Wellington coastline. Very uncommon in the North Island. In the South Island mainly east of the main divide, appearing to avoid areas of high rainfall

FLOWER COLOURS
White

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
Not Threatened for most of its range. However, very uncommon and under threat throughout the North Island, where it is now known from very few sites and viable populations.

ETYMOLOGY
discaria: Disc bearing
toumatou: Derived from the Maori name tumamataku.

WHERE TO BUY
Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

MORE INFORMATION