

# Dracophyllum marmoricola

## COMMON NAMES

marble Inaka, marble turpentine shrub

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing sprawling blue-green shrub with short grass-like leaves crowded at twig tips inhabiting limestone areas in Northwest Nelson. Leaves blue-green, 6-32mm long by 1-2mm wide. Flowers white, tubular, crowded at tip of twigs.

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrublet 2-15 cm tall, multi-stemmed, decumbent to prostrate and sometimes forming compact cushions; bark grey and smooth to finely fissured. Leaves spreading, crowded at the tips of branches, sheathing at base; sheath glaucous, 2.2-6.5 x 3-4 mm, subcoriaceous, shoulder rounded to truncate, margin ciliate; lamina coriaceous, glaucous, linear-triangular to broadly linear-triangular, 5.6-32.0 x 0.75-2.00 mm, slightly concave, surfaces minutely verrucose, margin serrulate, with 12-13 teeth per cm, apex triquetrous. Inflorescence an oblong raceme terminal on branches, dense, 9-24 mm long with 3-8 flowers; inflorescence bracts persistent, longer than flower, coriaceous, light green to glaucous, subulate, 7.5-10.5 x 0.6-1.4 mm at base, verrucose with serrulate margin; flower bract persistent, shorter than flower, coriaceous, broadly ovate, 5-7 x 3.0-4.5 mm, glabrous, margin ciliate, subacute to acute. Flowers sessile. Sepals green to reddish brown, ovate-lanceolate, 4.5-5.5 x 1.5-2.0 mm, equal to shorter than corolla tube, glabrous, ciliate; apex subacute to acute. Corolla white; tube cylindrical, 4.0-6.5 x 2.0-2.5 mm, glabrous; lobes spreading to reflexed, broadly triangular, shorter than corolla tube, 1.5-2.2 x 1.5-1.8 mm, acute to subacute, adaxial surface papillate, abaxial surface glabrous. Stamens epipetalous, 0.4-0.5 mm long; in upper third of corolla tube, anthers light yellow, oblong, 0.6-0.8 mm long, included. Nectary scales separate, rectangular, 0.7-0.8 x 0.4-0.8 mm, apex truncate and emarginate to variously toothed, glabrous; ovary obovate, 1.4-1.5 x 1.3-1.5 mm, apex truncate, glabrous; style enclosed, 1.5 mm long, glabrous; stigma 5-lobed. Capsule sessile, light brown, 2.5-3.5 x 1.8-2.0 mm, obovoid, glabrous, enclosed in persistent sepals; style persistent; seed light brown, ovoid, 1 mm long, surface slightly reticulate.



Mt Arthur (January). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



At Mt Arthur (January). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

### **SIMILAR TAXA**

Similar to *Dracophyllum recurvum* but differs in the leaves being minutely rugose to verrucose, not recurved at the apices, flower bracts shorter than flower, sepals glabrous, and apex of ovary truncate. It differs from *Dracophyllum kirkii* in the narrower verrucose leaves with triquetrous apices and the racemose inflorescence.

### **DISTRIBUTION**

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island, restricted to North-West Nelson (Kahurangi National Park)

### **HABITAT**

Subalpine to alpine (1310-1790 m a.s.l.). Confined to marble exposures where it grows on dark sandy loam in open and exposed sites or in rock crevices in low cliffs in alpine tussock-herbfield.

### **THREATS**

Not Threatened. Listed because it is a narrow-range, marble endemic confined to few mountain ranges within Kahurangi National Park.

### **GENUS**

*Dracophyllum*

### **FAMILY**

Ericaceae

### **AUTHORITY**

*Dracophyllum marmoricola* S.Venter

### **SYNONYMS**

None (described in 2002)

### **ENDEMIC TAXON**

Yes

### **ENDEMIC GENUS**

No

### **ENDEMIC FAMILY**

No

### **FLOWERING**

December - March

### **FRUITING**

April - May

### **LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL**

Minute seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

### **PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE**

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild

### **WHERE TO BUY**

Not commercially available.

### **ETYMOLOGY**

**dracophyllum**: Dragon leaf, from its likeness to the dragon tree of the Canary Islands

**marmoricola**: From the Latin marmor 'marble' and cola 'colour', meaning marble-coloured

### **NVS CODE**

DRAMAR

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Venter, S. 2002: *Dracophyllum marmoricola* and *Dracophyllum ophioliticum* (Ericaceae), two new species from north-west Nelson, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 40: 39-47

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

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (4 January 2004). Description adapted from Venter (2002)

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dracophyllum-marmoricola/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dracophyllum-marmoricola/>

## PDF DATE

27 May 2026