

Elaeagnus ×reflexa

COMMON NAMES

elaeanus

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Vigorous, often scrambling, dense shrub; stems to about 20m long, covered in peltate or stellate scales. Young shoots, petioles and of midrib beneath with brown scales; older branches often spiny. Petiole 5~13mm long. Lamina 4.5~9 x 1.5~4cm, elliptic, soon becoming glabrous above, with silvery scales beneath, usually dotted with and sometimes densely covered in brown scales; margins undulate to almost flat; base rounded; apex obtuse, acute or shortly acuminate. Fascicles few-flowered; flowers fragrant, generally pendulous. Pedicels 3~7mm long, densely covered in brown scales. Calyx 10~13mm long, abruptly constricted above ovary, covered with mostly silvery and few brown scales outside; lobes 2~4mm long, triangular, acutely ribbed at base in bud. Stamens inserted at apex of tube; filaments very short, hidden behind anthers. Style slightly > calyx tube. Fruit 1.5~1.8 x .8~1cm, oblong, pale reddish-orange, with silver and brown scales. Seed 8-ribbed.

SIMILAR TAXA

A scrambling, dense shrub with stems up to approximately 20m long. The stem, young shoots, petioles and lower leaf midribs have scales (Webb et al. 1988). The plant has arching branches. The leaves are silvery underneath with brown scales. The trumpet flowers are small, cream and fragrant. The fruit is red-orange, oval and berry like. Woody, evergreen climber which can grow to dense thickets up to 10m tall.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. A plant of coastal and lowland habitats. The plant grows in sites of moderate to high fertility. The plant spreads from gardens and farms to adjacent trees and shrubs. A plant of scrub and forest margins, also found in secondary forest communities. Low and disturbed forest and forest margins are at risk from the plant. The plant occurs forest margins and coastal areas.

GENUS

Elaeagnus

FAMILY

Elaeagnaceae

AUTHORITY

Elaeagnus ×reflexa C.Morren & Decne.



Elaeagnus ×reflexa. Photographer: Auckland Regional Council, Licence: Public domain.



Elaeagnus x reflexa fruit. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FLOWERING

March, April, May

FRUITING

May, September.

YEAR NATURALISED

1940

ORIGIN

Possibly Japan

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

The plant is intolerant to frost and poor drainage, tolerant to drought and partly tolerant to shade. Seedlings are tolerant of partial shade. Requires medium to high soil fertility (Atkinson 1997).

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Plant is very long-lived, probably to over a century (Fromont and King, 1992). The plant self-seeds. Seed is dispersed by birds and vertebrate animals.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/elaeanus-reflexa/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026