

Erica arborea

COMMON NAMES

tree heath

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrub or small tree to about 5 m. Shoots densely hairy. Leaves 3-7 mm long. Small white bell-shaped flowers in racemes along the stems. Seed capsule about 2 mm long, each containing many very small seeds.

SIMILAR TAXA

Is very similar to *E. lusitanica* but can be easily distinguished by the hairy stems and much larger growth form.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Riverbanks and regenerating forest.

GENUS

Erica

FAMILY

Ericaceae

AUTHORITY

Erica arborea L.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

July, August, September, October, November, December,

YEAR NATURALISED

1935

ORIGIN

Mediterranean region to highlands of E. Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

ETYMOLOGY

erica: From the Greek ereika 'heath' or 'heather'

arborea: From the Latin arbor 'tree', meaning tree-like



Erica arborea. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Erica arborea. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

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](#).

NVS CODE

ERIARB

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/erica-arborea/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026