Fuchsia procumbens

COMMON NAMES
creeping fuchsia, climbing fuchsia, trailing fuchsia

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp, DPS, DPT
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS
Violet/Purple, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Subdioecious, lianoid, creeping, glabrescent, prostrate shrub forming large scrambling masses. Stems woody, pliant, slender 3-6 mm diameter, up to 2 m long; branchlets even more slender. Petioles filiform, 15-30 mm long, glabrous or sparsely hairy. Leaves 5-20 x 5-20 mm, suborbicular to broad-ovate, membranous, glabrous to glabrate, sinuate, subserrulate; base subcordate; apex obtuse or rounded. Flowers solitary, erect, pedicels erect, 5-8 mm long, slender. Flora tube 6-12 mm long, golden yellow, tubular-campanulate. Sepals 5-8 mm, lanceolate or narrow-lanceolate, purplish at apices, sharply reflexed. Petals absent. Filaments 2-4 mm, slender, purple. Style 8-16 mm, > staminodes in female flowers, almost = to stamens in perfect flowers; stigma capitate to 4-lobed. Berry 15-25 x 5-10 mm, ovoid-oblong to obovoid, crimson to magenta often with a waxy bloom.

In cultivation. December 1982. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Licence: CC BY.

Female flower. Whananaki, eastern Northland. Dec 2007. Photographer: A. J. Townsend, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA
None.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. North Island from the Ninety Mile Beach and Perpendicular Point south to Maunganui Bluff in the west and Kennedy Bay (Coromandel Peninsula) in the east. It is known as a naturalised plant on Kapiti Island.

HABITAT
A strictly coastal species. F. procumbens has been collected from cobble/gravel beaches, coastal cliff faces, coastal scrub and grassland, dune slacks and swales, and from the margins of saltmarshes (in places where it would be inundated during spring tides). It is quite tolerant of naturalised grasses and may be found growing amongst dense swards of kikuyu grass (Pennisetum clandestinum Chiov.).

THREATS
At various times regarded as seriously threatened, partly because some populations comprise only the single sex-type. However, comprehensive surveys throughout this species range have discovered new populations and confirmed the persistence of the majority of the older sites. Indeed its range has hardly contracted, and it would seem that the distribution of sex-types is natural. Because the species is so tolerant of environmental disturbance and weeds it is now regarded as biologically sparse. However, some populations have been eliminated recently by coastal development for holiday homes. If this trend continues then this species will probably qualify for a higher level of threat in the not to distant future.

GENUS
Fuchsia

FAMILY
Onagraceae

AUTHORITY
Fuchsia procumbens A.Cunn.

SYNONYMS
Fuchsia kirkii Hook.f.

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
September - May

FRUITING
November - July

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Fleshy berries are dispersed by invertebrate frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easy from layered pieces, fresh seed and semi-hardwood cuttings. A remarkably adaptable plant that can be grown in most situations. It makes an excellent ground cover and is ideal for a hanging basket.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING
FACU: Facultative Upland
Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY
fuchsia: After Leonhart Fuchs (17 Jan 1501 - 10 May 1566), a German physician and regarded as one of the three founding fathers of botany.
procumbens: Sprawling

NVS CODE
FUCPRO

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 22

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp
2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp
2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon
2004 | Sparse
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, PF, Sp Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland" Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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 by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/fuchsia-procumbens/

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25 May 2026