

Galega officinalis

COMMON NAME

goat's rue

FAMILY

Fabaceae

AUTHORITY

Galega officinalis L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

GALOFF

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

The plant is able to tolerate severe frost. Invades flood prone land. The plant grows in pastures and on riverbanks.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

Rarely is a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands (non-wetlands).

SIMILAR TAXA

The plant is a perennial growing to a metre high (Hilgendorf 1926). The plant is much branched and usually grows into dense clumps. The plant has pinnate leaves and lilac coloured flowers half an inch in length that are borne on spikes approximately 30 cm long. The seeds are hard, heavy, small and oval and are enclosed in pods similar to that of a pea.

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

LIFE CYCLE

The seeds are able to retain their viability for more than a year under water. Abundant seed is produced - approximately 50 000 seeds per year. The seed is dispersed by gravel movement and water. The plant is dispersed by machinery and road metal transport (Ogle 1997). The plant is shed by explosion. The plant is spread by water movements and in river metal found in pastures and river beds.

YEAR NATURALISED

1906

ORIGIN

Europe, Asia Minor, C. and S. Russia, W. Asia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Accidental

TOLERANCES

When damaged, the plant has the ability to regrow.



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ETYMOLOGY

galega: From the Greek gala 'milk' and ago 'to lead', the plant being valued as a fodder for lactating cows and goats, hence the common name goat's rue

officinalis: From the Latin officina shortened from opificina which originally meant 'workshop' but later came to mean a monastic storeroom, herb-room or pharmacy. Refers to the plant's real or perceived medicinal value.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/galega-officinalis/>