

Homalanthus populifolius

COMMON NAMES

Queensland poplar

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Glabrous shrub or small tree up to 5 m high. Twigs rounded, slightly ribbed. Leaves ovate to rhombic, truncate to obtuse at base, acute to acuminate or rarely obtuse at apex, (3)-5-15-(20) cm long, usually turning red in cooler part of year; seedling leaves broadly ovate, truncate at base; petioles greater than, equal to, or less than blade; stipules soon deciduous. Racemes up to 17 cm long, usually with few solitary long-pedicellate female flowers below or at base, and many clusters of (1)-3-4 short-pedicellate male flowers (racemes rarely unisexual, or with 1-2 male flowers clustered with upper females); each group of flowers subtended by a bract and 2 prominent glands. Male flowers: stamens 4-10; perianth segments 2. Female flowers: ovary 2-celled; styles 2. Fruit more or less smooth, grooved between the 2 cells, ridged on keels, glaucous, 8-10 mm diameter (Webb et al 1988).

SIMILAR TAXA

Can be distinguished from the endemic *H. polyandrus* by the clustered male flowers and female flowers with 2 styles and 2 -celled ovary.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. A pioneer species that grows in gaps or on the margin of rainforests in Australia. It will produce thickets in these situations but canopy trees seem to be able to grow through. This would suggest that it prefers dappled shade but has also been seen growing in quite sunny areas. It is often used to provide shelter in revegetation areas in Australia (John Clarkson, pers. comm.).

GENUS

Homalanthus

FAMILY

Euphorbiaceae

AUTHORITY

Homalanthus populifolius Graham

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September, October, November



Homalanthus populifolius showing tree form.
Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Homalanthus populifolius flowers.
Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

YEAR NATURALISED

1980

ORIGIN

NSW to New Guinea

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental.

TOLERANCES

Shade tolerant (Lisa Forester 1996).

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Appears to be long lived (George Wilson, pers. comm.). Bird dispersed (Lisa Forester 1996). Other methods of movement include gravity, water and machinery especially roadside mowers (Tony McCluggage pers. comm.).

NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord. The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

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

HOMPOP

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Gardner, R. 1999. *Homalanthus* (Euphorbiaceae) in New Zealand and its fruit. Auckland Botanical Society Journal, 54: 6-7

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/homalanthus-populifolius/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026