

# Korthalsella salicornioides

## COMMON NAME

Dwarf mistletoe

## SYNONYMS

*Viscum salicornioides* A.Cunn.

## FAMILY

Viscaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Korthalsella salicornioides* (A.Cunn.) Tiegh.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

KORSAL

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 28$

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | Threatened – Nationally Critical

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: EF

2004 | Sparse

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Dense mass of green to reddish-yellow beaded succulent stems to 10cm long growing on twigs of another plant (mainly manuka and kanuka). Leaves (stems) 3-10mm long by 1-3mm wide, round. Flowers tiny, fruit small, yellowish.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North, South and Stewart Islands. From Te Pahi south - easily overlooked.

## HABITAT

Coastal to upper montane and subalpine (0-1300 m a.s.l.). A parasite found in forest and shrublands. Most commonly found parasitic on *Leptospermum scoparium* J.R.Forst. et G.Forst. (kahikatoa/manuka) and members of the *Kunzea ericoides* (A.Rich.) Joy Thomps. (Rawiri/Titiri/Kanuka) complex.



Black Jack. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



A Korthalsella plant growing on manuka. Photographer: Andrew Townsend

## FEATURES

Hemiparasitic, succulent, much branched, green, yellow-green, red-green to orange-green plant parasitising exposed branches and branchlets of host. Haustoria internal, dark green, encircling stele of host. Plants 30-100 x 10-450 mm, erupting from host bark, individual aerial structures lasting from 1-4 years before dehiscing and resprouting. Branches arising at narrow angles; Internodes terete, succulent to subsucculent, 3-10 x 1-3 mm, narrowed to a finely constricted node. Collar truncate, up to 0.5 mm long, sheathing at nodes. Flowers scarcely differentiated from barren stems, 3-10 x 1 mm. Fruit 1.5 mm long, ovoid to globular, dispersed by birds or ejected under hydraulic pressure

## SIMILAR TAXA

None - the two other species of *Korthalsella* Tiegh. endemic to New Zealand have flattened internodes and fewer branches arising at wider angles.

## FLOWERING

October - March

## FRUITING

October - May

## LIFE CYCLE

Fleshy berries are dispersed by ballistic projection, attachment and possibly frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - should not be removed from the wild

## THREATS

An apparently naturally uncommon and biologically sparse species which can on occasion be locally abundant, but is more usually known from large parts of its likely range by only spot or scattered occurrences. In some parts of its range it is seriously at risk due to the felling of its main host species (*Leptospermum* and *Kunzea*) for fire wood and also to clear land for farming or pine plantations.

## ETYMOLOGY

**korthalsella:** After Korthals, botanist

**salicornioides:** Like *Salicornia* (glasswort)

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

## HOSTS

The most host specific of the three New Zealand species of the genus, the favoured host is *Leptospermum scoparium* followed by *Kunzea ericoides* s.l. However *Sophora chathamica* Cockayne, *Myrsine australis* (A.Rich.) Allan, *Dracophyllum acerosum* Bergg., *Melicope simplex* A.Cunn. and *Gaultheria antipoda* G.Forst. are sometimes also parasitised.

## ATTRIBUTION

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

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Cameron, E.K. 2001. *Korthalsella salicornioides* discovered close to Auckland city. Auckland Botanical Society Journal, 56: 53-54

Nickrent, D.L.; Malécot, V.; Vidal-Russell, R.; Der, J.P. 2010: A revised classification of Santalales. *Taxon* 59: 538-558.

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

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Korthalsella salicornioides* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/korthalsella-salicornioides/> (Date website was queried)

**MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/korthalsella-salicornioides/>