

Leycesteria formosa

COMMON NAME

Himalayan honeysuckle

FAMILY

Caprifoliaceae

AUTHORITY

Leycesteria formosa Wall.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

LEYFOR

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial. A plant of coastal and lowland habitats (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). The plant occurs in streams and favours damper habitats (Veitch 1995; Department of Conservation 1996). A plant of streams, shrublands, light gaps in forests (such as windfall gaps), roadsides, exotic plantations, farm hedges and wasteland habitats (Veitch 1995; Department of Conservation 1996). A plant of scrub and forest margin, shrubland and riverbed communities (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995).

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

FEATURES

Shrub to 2m high; stems hollow, glabrous, green, glaucous at first. Petiole .5~2cm long, purplish, with hairy groove on upper side. Lamina 4~14 x 1.5~8cm, ovate or broad-ovate, mostly entire, sometimes 5~9-lobed with rounded sinuses, becoming glabrous except for midrib and bases of main veins; base rounded to cordate; apex long-acuminate. Infl. 3~8cm long at flowering. Bracts mostly 1~3cm long, sessile, broad-ovate, aristate-acuminate, generally glandular-hairy, usu. deep reddish-purple. Calyx small, hidden by bracts; lobes very unequal. Corolla approx. 1.5cm long, funnelform, white; lobes rounded at apex, much < tube, with glandular-hairy margins. Stamens shortly exerted. Style > stamens. Berry 7~10mm diam., subglobose, dark brownish-purple, glandular-hairy. Seed 1.1~1.5mm long, obovoid-ellipsoid, shining brown, minutely white-dotted. (- Webb et. al., 1988)



Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Himalayan honeysuckle. Photographer: John Barkla

SIMILAR TAXA

An evergreen shrub 2 - 3 metres tall (Hilgendorf 1926; Department of Conservation 1996). The plant has green hollow stems (Hilgendorf 1926; Department of Conservation 1996). The leaves occur opposite each other on the branches (Hilgendorf 1926). The leaves are 8 cm long (up to 24cm long (Department of Conservation 1996)), broad at the base and pointed at the tip (Hilgendorf 1926). The flowers are white and pink in drooping spikes (Hilgendorf 1926). The flowers are enclosed within pairs of purplish leaves (Hilgendorf 1926). The red-purple bracts which surround the small flowers are a conspicuous distinguishing feature of this plant (Veitch 1995; Department of Conservation 1996). The fruit is black brownish purple and is 7 - 10 mm in diameter (Veitch 1995; Department of Conservation 1996).

FLOWERING

December, January, February, March, April, May.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Abundant seed produced (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995; Veitch 1995, Department of Conservation 1996). Water and birds disperse seed (Veitch 1995; Department of Conservation 1996).

YEAR NATURALISED

1878

ORIGIN

temp Himalayan

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

The plant is shade intolerant.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/leycesteria-formosa/>