

# Lonicera japonica

## COMMON NAME

Japanese honeysuckle

## FAMILY

Caprifoliaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Lonicera japonica* Thunb.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

LONJAP

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## HABITAT

Terrestrial. A plant of coastal and lowland communities which grows in moderately fertile sites. The plant grows more vigorously in deeper valley soils (Department of Conservation 1996). Grows best on calcareous soils and moist forest soils; it rarely establishes on excessively drained and drought-prone sandy or stony soils (Williams and Timmins, 1997).

Occurs in scrub, forest margins, shrublands, disturbed or secondary forest, coastal areas, modified lowland forest, wetland margins, inshore islands, roadsides, farm hedges, wasteland, rough pasture, open forest, forest, wetlands, streambanks and around margins and in clearings (Webb et. al. 1988).

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

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

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Vigorous climber, evergreen or semi-evergreen in cold districts. Stems mostly purplish and hirsute when young. Leaves dimorphic - those produced in colder weather in early spring sinuate to deeply lobed; summer leaves and those on reproductive shoots entire. Petiole to 1.3cm long, densely hirsute. Lamina of entire leaves 2.5~12 x 1.5 ~ 6cm, ovate-oblong, ovate or ovate-elliptic, usu. deep shining green or sometimes yellowish-green above, lighter green below, sometimes mottled yellow, densely hairy to glabrous on veins beneath; midrib above glabrous or hairy; base rounded, truncate or subcordate; apex obtuse to acute; leaves subtending; flowers similar but smaller, all free. Flowers in axillary pairs, fragrant; peduncles 5~25mm long, densely hirsute. Bracteoles generally oblong-obovate, much < ovaries. Calyx lobes very small, roughly narrow-triangular, fringed with long hairs. Corolla 2~4.5cm long, usu. white, becoming yellow after anthesis, often flushed pink on reverse, glandular-hairy outside; tube 1~3cm long, cylindrical; limb 2-lipped; single linear lobe of lower lip recurving; upper lip 4-toothed. Stamens and style < to = corolla limb. Ovaries separate. Berry 5~7mm diam., broad-ovate to suborbicular, glossy black. Seed around 2mm diam. (- Webb et. al., 1988)



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### SIMILAR TAXA

The plant is a vigorous perennial climber with aromatic flowers (Webb et. al. 1988). The plant has hairy purplish young stems. The flowers are paired and tubular and are white to yellow in colour. The berries are black. The leaves are entire, roughly oval in outline to deeply lobed, lighter green below. Leaves are 2.5-12 x 1.5-6cm.

### FLOWERING

September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May

### FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

### LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Leaves are retained over winter and are capable of growing in equable conditions. Seeds require a period of cold temperatures to break dormancy - temperatures of 5-8 degrees Celsius for 60 days. Germination occurs in spring as soon as air temperatures reach above 10 degrees Celsius. Plant populations seem to grow entirely vegetatively as no seedlings have been seen around established plants (Silbery pers. comm.). Seed viability is unknown (Wotherspoon 1996). Birds disperse seed and road machinery.

### YEAR NATURALISED

1926

### ORIGIN

E Asia

### REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

### TOLERANCES

The plant is intolerant to shade and resprouts from broken stems or roots due to physical damage or grazing. Seedlings require high light. Frost, wind and drought tolerant and well adapted to low light. Very tolerant to moisture; moderate tolerance to shade e.g. under Kanuka forest. Growth is limited by the death of shoots by frost; many inland areas of the SI are probably too dry; grows on a range of substrates from pH 4.0-7.9; high degree of shade tolerance, at least for vegetative growth. Requires medium soil fertility (Atkinson 1997).

### ETYMOLOGY

**japonica**: Of Japan

### 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](#).

### MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lonicera-japonica/>