Malva arborea

COMMON NAME
Tree mallow

SYNONYMS
Lavatera arborea; Malva dendromorpha M.F.Ray (1998)

FAMILY
Malvaceae

AUTHORITY
Malva arborea (L.) Webb & Berthel.

FLORA CATEGORY
Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Dicotyledonous Herbs other than Composites

NVS CODE
MALARB

CONSERVATION STATUS
Not assessed

HABITAT
Terrestrial. Waste places, cultivated land, Coastal sites.

FEATURES
Stout biennial herb, usually with a single stem up to 2 m tall. Stems hairy when young, becoming hairless and woody at base when older. Leaves velvety to the touch, with 5-7 lobes, up to 20 cm across. Lilac to purple flowers arranged in clusters at end and along upper parts of the stem. 6-8 seeds per fruit.

SIMILAR TAXA
There are several other large Malva species that have naturalised in New Zealand.

FLOWERING
August, September, October, November, January, February, March, April, May.

FLOWER COLOURS
Violet/Purple

LIFE CYCLE
Spreads by seed, 6-8 seeds produced by each fruit. Dispersed by soil movement.

YEAR NATURALISED
1870

ORIGIN
W. and S. Europe, N. Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION
Ornamental

TOLERANCES
Prefers high light, thrives in disturbed sites and can tolerate salt.
ETYMOLOGY
arborea: From the Latin arbor ‘tree’, meaning tree-like

TAXONOMIC NOTES
Long known as Lavatera arborea, in 1998 this species was transferred to Malva by Ray (1998).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

MORE INFORMATION