

Nerium oleander

COMMON NAMES

oleander

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Much-branched shrub to about 4 m high. Leaves opposite and shortly petiolate, to 15 x 2.5 cm on flowering shoots, to 25 x 4 cm on suckering shoots. Large pink flowers with reddish-purple calyx. Flowers are usually single but can be semi-double. Fruits are uncommon, but are up to 18 cm long when produced.

SIMILAR TAXA

Nerium is widely cultivated and over 400 varieties have been described, but there is just 1 species in the genus.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Persisting in the vicinity of old plantations.

GENUS

Nerium

FAMILY

Apocynaceae

AUTHORITY

Nerium oleander L.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November, December, January, February, March.

YEAR NATURALISED

1950

ORIGIN

Mediterranean region, S.W. Asia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental.

TOLERANCES

Appears restricted to the warmest parts of New Zealand.



Nerium oleander. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Hamilton Road, Herne Bay, Auckland.
Photographer: John Sawyer, Licence: CC BY-NC.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seed is only formed when 2 or more varieties are grown together.

POISONOUS PLANT

All parts of this plant are very poisonous.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/nerium-oleander/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026