

Passiflora caerulea

COMMON NAMES

blue passion flower

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Hairless vine with angular shoots. Leaves deeply 5-lobed and thin, middle lobe 3.5-8.5 cm long. Flowers purple/white, December-April.

SIMILAR TAXA

Can be separated from all other passiflora by at least some of the leaves having 5 lobes. Very distinctive blue flowers in summer.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Coastal areas, lowlands, light gaps, prefers fertile soil (DOC, 1998). Forest margins and scrub, roadsides wastelands, farm and orchard hedges, domestic gardens.

GENUS

Passiflora

FAMILY

Passifloraceae

AUTHORITY

Passiflora caerulea L.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

December, January, February, March, April.

YEAR NATURALISED

1958

ORIGIN

S. Brazil to Argentina

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

The most cold-tolerant of all *Passiflora* species in NZ.



Passiflora caerulea. Photographer: Auckland Regional Council, Licence: Public domain.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Reproduces from seed, but also spreads vegetatively over large distances. Many viable seeds are borne in each fruit. Dispersed by blackbirds, fruit is also eaten by possums.

ETYMOLOGY

passiflora: Passionflower

caerulea: From the Latin caeruleus 'sky blue'

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](#).

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

NVS CODE

PASCAE

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan, PB; Sykes, WR 2003. *Passiflora* (Passifloraceae) in New Zealand: a revised key with notes on distribution. *NZ J Botany* 41: 217-221. DOI: [10.1080/0028825X.2003.9512842](https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.2003.9512842)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/passiflora-caerulea/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026