

Rhododendron ponticum subsp. ponticum

COMMON NAMES

rhododendron

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Large evergreen shrub to 6 m high with light lilac-pink to pinkish purple flowers and dark green leaves. Can set down roots from its branches.

SIMILAR TAXA

Rhododendron ponticum is the only rhododendron in NZ to sucker (i.e., sets down roots from its branches).

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

GENUS

Rhododendron

FAMILY

Ericaceae

AUTHORITY

Rhododendron ponticum L. subsp. ponticum

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October, November, December

YEAR NATURALISED

1958

ORIGIN

SE Europe, Asia minor

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

Grows 0-1800m in the Mediterranean (Owen 1997).



Seedling. Photographer: Graeme La Cock, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Rhododendron ponticum. Photographer: Graeme La Cock, Licence: CC BY-NC.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Perennial. 12 years before seeding but prolific annual seed. Dark dense canopy. Outbreeder (Melanie Newfield, 1996). Reproduces by seed and vegetatively by suckering.

POISONOUS PLANT

All rhododendrons are poisonous.

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

RHOPON

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/rhododendron-ponticum-subsp-ponticum/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026