

# Ricinus communis

## COMMON NAME

Castor oil plant

## FAMILY

Euphorbiaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Ricinus communis* L.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Dicotyledonous Trees & Shrubs

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not assessed

## HABITAT

Terrestrial.

## FEATURES

Castor oil plant is a small, spreading tree up to 4m tall. The leaves are large, soft and deeply lobed (20-40 cm diam.). The flowers are clustered in heads and the soft spiny capsules contain rectangular seeds up to 15 mm long. (West 1996)

## SIMILAR TAXA

The NZ plants usually have purple leaves (Landcare Research 1999).

## FLOWERING

December, January, February

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Red/Pink

## FRUITING

not known

## YEAR NATURALISED

1864

## ORIGIN

Tropical Africa

## Reason For Introduction

Ornamental

Poisonous plant:

The mottled seeds are poisonous if eaten.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ricinus-communis/>



*Ricinus communis* immature inflorescence, Treeway, Mt Albert, Auckland. Photographer: Peter de Lange



*Ricinus communis* inflorescence with young flowers, Treeway, Mt Albert, Auckland.

