

Rubus schmidelioides var. subpauperatus

COMMON NAMES

tātārāmoa, bush lawyer, white-leaved lawyer

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Scrambling vine. Stems, petioles, midveins densely covered in red prickles. Leaves compound; leaflets three to five, very narrowly lance-shaped, leathery, dark-green to bronze green, markedly wrinkled above with the undersides covered in grey-white or brown tomentum. Flowers white or cream in small panicles. Fruits yellow or orange.

FLOWER COLOURS

Cream, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Much-branched dioecious vine with stems up to 10 m or more long when growing through supporting vegetation or forming sprawling bushes with interlacing branchlets when exposed. **Young branchlets** terete, up to 40 mm diameter; pubescent, becoming glabrous with age, armed (often heavily so); armature comprised of small, reddish prickles. **Stipules** minute, caducous, linear to linear-filiform. **Leaves** of adults ternate or palmate, petioles 20-50 mm long, covered in prickles; lamina of adult leaflets 20-50 × 5-10 mm, coriaceous, lanceolate, to narrowly lanceolate-elliptic, acute to subacute, rounded to oblique at base, margins coarsely and often unevenly serrate, adaxially dark green to bronze-green, more or less glossy, glabrous or almost glabrous, rugose to bullate, veins distinct (these often minutely pubescent), abaxially pale green, sometimes glaucous, usually finely, densely tomentose, tomentum grey-white to brown, veins prominent below, pubescent, midrib heavily; petiolules 3-5(-20 mm long). **Inflorescence** a much-branched panicle up to 100 mm long (rarely reduced to few-flowered racemes), branchlets and pedicels unarmed, more or less finely pubescent. **Flowers** white to cream, usually densely aggregate, on pedicels 5-10 mm long. Sepals 2-6 mm long, ovate-oblong to broad-ovate, pubescent; petals 5, 4-7 mm long, ovate to broadly ovate. Male flowers with numerous stamens, ovary absent or rudimentary. Female flowers with rudimentary stamen, carpels numerous. **Fruits** 5-9 mm diameter, drupelets 8-12 (or more), yellow or orange. **Endocarp** 'seed' 1.9-2.5 mm long, dorsally ridged 2x.



Strath Taieri. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Middlemarch, Otago. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 31/10/2015, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from introduced *Rubus* (blackberries, raspberries wineberries etc) by the smaller flowers, usually palmate or ternate leaves, and the lack of long glandular bristly hairs on the young stems.

Rubus schmidelioides var. *subpauperatus* differs from *R. schmidelioides* var. *schmidelioides* by the more conspicuously armed stems, petioles and leaf midveins, ternate to palmate leaves, by the narrowly lanceolate leaflets, and more compact panicles.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South and Stewart Islands. In the South Island, mostly in the east from Canterbury South.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane in scrub and forest. Often in grey scrub

GENUS

Rubus

FAMILY

Rosaceae

AUTHORITY

Rubus schmidelioides var. *subpauperatus* (Cockayne) Allan

SYNONYMS

Rubus subpauperatus Cockayne; *Rubus cissoides* var. *subpauperatus* (Cockayne) Cheeseman

TAXONOMIC NOTES

As the primary distinctions of var. *subpauperatus*; leaflet number, size, shape and degree of armature do seem distinct, then, pending a modern taxonomic revision of New Zealand *Rubus*, recognition of this variety is probably still warranted.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September - November

FRUITING

December - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from layered stems and semi-hardwood cuttings. Flourishes when planted in damp ground in a well-lighted situation. Poorly known from cultivation. The fruits though edible are insipid.

ETYMOLOGY

rubus: From the Latin meaning bramble

schmidelioides: Like *schmidelia*, a soap wort

NVS CODE

RUBSUB

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I, Wellington, Government Printer.

Eagle, A.L. 2006: Eagle's complete trees and shrubs of New Zealand. Wellington, Te Papa Press

Webb CJ, Sykes WR, Garnock-Jones PJ 1988: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV. Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch.

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2001: Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons. Christchurch, Manuka Press.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (5 November 2016). Description based on Allan (1961), Webb et al. (1988) and Webb & Simpson (2001).

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/rubus-schmidelioides-var-subpauperatus/>

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