

Solanum diflorum

COMMON NAMES

false Jerusalem cherry

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small unarmed shrub with stems to about 50 cm tall. The leaves are quite variable in size but can reach up to 14 x 8 cm, entire or with wavy margins. Hairs on young stems and very young leaves dense, becoming less scattered on older stems and leaves. Flowers are white and are solitary or in small clusters. The berry is scarlet or orange-red, round and up to about 1.5 cm diameter, containing a seed up to 3mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Very similar to *S. pseudocapsicum* but can be distinguished by the hairs which are very dense on the young shoots and leaves but becoming scattered on older shoots and leaves. *S. pseudocapsicum* is almost always hairless.

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

GENUS

Solanum

FAMILY

Solanaceae

AUTHORITY

Solanum diflorum Vell.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December

YEAR NATURALISED

1958

ORIGIN

Temperate eastern S. America



Featherston, Wairarapa. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 02/06/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Fruit. Featherston, Wairarapa. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 02/06/2007, Licence: CC BY.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

Appears to be quite shade tolerant and can establish under canopy.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Spreads by seed which is dispersed by birds

POISONOUS PLANT

The red-orange berries are poisonous if eaten.

ETYMOLOGY

solanum: Derivation uncertain - possibly from the Latin word sol, meaning "sun," referring to its status as a plant of the sun. Another possibility is that the root was solare, meaning "to soothe," or solamen, meaning "a comfort," which would refer to the soothing effects of the plant upon ingestion.

NVS CODE

SOLDIF

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/solanum-diflorum/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026