

Solanum laxum

COMMON NAME

Potato vine

SYNONYMS

Solanum jasminoides

FAMILY

Solanaceae

AUTHORITY

Solanum laxum Spreng.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

FEATURES

High-climbing, usually hairless vine. Stems to 15 m long, semi-woody. Leaf stems to 3 cm long, slender, twining. Leaves alternate, 20–60 x 7–30 mm, thin to oval, occasionally with lobes at base. Flowers star-shaped, white or pale mauve with central yellow cone, 20–33 mm diameter, many and long-lasting in loose terminal clusters, Jan–Dec. Berries 4–6 mm diameter, shiny, dark blue-black, often absent.

SIMILAR TAXA

Can be confused with *Jasminum polyanthum* when not flowering. However *S. jasminoides* has alternate leaves. The potato-like flowers. Immediately place this vine in Solanaceae

FLOWERING

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

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

YEAR NATURALISED

1958

ORIGIN

S Brazil

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.



Stokes Valley. Jun 2006. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Solanum jasminoides. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

Reason For Introduction

Ornamental

Life Cycle Comments

Perennial.

Reproduction

Some of its spread is almost certainly vegetative. (DoC, 1998).

Dispersal

spread by birds (DoC, 1998).

ATTRIBUTION

Species name change from *S. jasminoides* to *S. laxum* by C C Ogle, 24 Oct 2019

MORE INFORMATION

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