

Solanum linnaeanum

COMMON NAME

apple of Sodom

FAMILY

Solanaceae

AUTHORITY

Solanum linnaeanum Hepper et P.-M. Jaeger

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

SOLLIN

HABITAT

Terrestrial.

FEATURES

Perennial shrub to 1m tall, generally stellate-hairy, branched, strongly armed; prickles yellow, to approx. 1cm long, glabrous or nearly so. Petioles to around 5cm long, prickly. Lamina to about 9 x 7cm, ovate to oblong, deeply pinnatisect, scarcely lobed in seedlings; lobes irregular, sinuate, with rounded apices, extending to 7/8 midrib, with hairs scattered above and mostly dense below, sometimes glabrate except for prickles on midrib and main veins; base truncate to rounded. Cymes few-flowered; pedicels to approx. 1cm long, densely stellate-hairy. Calyx 3~12mm long, often densely stellate-hairy, sometimes prickly, accrescent; lobes ovate to oblong, mainly = tube. Corolla 2.5~3.5cm diam., mauve or violet, stellate-hairy outside; lobes broadly ovate. Anthers 4~6mm long. Berry 1.5~3cm diam., almost globose, mottled green and white when immature, yellow at maturity; stone cells 0. Seeds approx. 3mm diam., subglobose to broad-obovoid. (-Webb et. al., 1988)

SIMILAR TAXA

Shrub or subshrub to 1-(3) m tall with many yellow thorns, berries green and white changing to yellow at maturity. Can be distinguished from other prickly *Solanum* spp. by the combination of perennial woody habit with clump forming roots, green leaves, mauve or violet flowers, September-May.

FLOWERING

September, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, Yellow

FRUITING

September to May

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial.

YEAR NATURALISED

1883



Karekare. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Karekare. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

ORIGIN

N Africa

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

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.

POISONOUS PLANT

This species has been reported as poisonous if eaten.

MORE INFORMATION

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