

# Tecomanthe speciosa

## COMMON NAME

Tecomanthe, akapukaea

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Bignoniaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Tecomanthe speciosa* W.R.B.Oliv.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Dicotyledonous Lianes and Related Trailing Plants

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 38$

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, IE, OL

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL, IE

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Critical

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Three Kings Islands, Great (Manawa Tawhi) Island, Tasman stream. One plant only.

## HABITAT

Growing up from a stony stream bed within mixed coastal forest dominated by Kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides* (A.Rich.) Joy Thomps.), and pigeonwood (*Hedycarya arborea* J.R.Forst, et G.Forst.).

## FEATURES

Robust leafy vine, producing numerous 4-angled stems 5-20 m long; these initially green to reddish green, maturing pale grey; rooting at nodes. Leaves dark green above, paler beneath, coriaceous, imparipinnate, 3-5-foliolate. Petiole pulvinate up to 60 x 40 mm; petiolules pulvinate 5-10 mm, terminal up to 30 mm. Lamina 50-180 x 30-100 mm, broad-elliptic, broad-obovate, to orbicular, entire, base oblique to cuneate, apex apiculate to retuse. Inflorescences corymbose, 5-50-flowered. Peduncle 20-30 mm, pedicels 10 mm. Calyx 25 x 10 mm, green, tubular, 3-5 lobed. Corolla greenish-white, maturing creamy-white or pale yellow; tube 20-50 x 15-20 mm, cylindric, corolla lobes 5, subacute, recurving with age. Stamens 4, 50-60 mm, fused near tube base. Style 40-60 mm, slender, stigma 2-lobed. Fruits woody, subcylindric capsules 150-200 x 35-40 mm. Seeds 10 x 25 mm, flattened, encircled by a papery, frayed wing.



Auckland Botanic Gardens. Photographer: Jesse Bythell



*Tecomanthe speciosa* flowers. Photographer: Lisa Forester, Ex Cult.

## SIMILAR TAXA

None. However, some species of Pandorea Spach, and Jasmine (Jasminium Dum.) have a superficial vegetative similarity. The flowers of Pandorea (which is closely related to Tecomanthe) are similar in shape, but are smaller, and usually white, pink or less commonly yellow. Jasmine flowers are very different, being smaller, with longer lobes, white, yellow or pink and strongly scented.

## FLOWERING

Autumn to early winter

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

## FRUITING

Year round. Fruit generally mature 3 or so months after flowering but the pods are retained on the vine for up to several years.

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from stem cuttings, aerial and ground layering and from seed. Seed must be sown fresh (it will not keep for very long, especially if it has dried out). Place seed on soil surface and water gently. Seed should germinate within 1-2 weeks. Seedlings grow rapidly, and can flower within 2-3 years. Cutting grown plants are more variable with flowering, most nursery stock (which is obtained as cuttings from seedling material) flowers within 2-3 years. However, cuttings raised from the original plant often flower sporadically in the 5 year from cutting, some may never flower at all.

## THREATS

Only one plant has been found in the wild. This plant was saved from certain extinction by the eradication of feral goats from Great Island (Three Kings) in 1946. Since then the vine has been threatened by the rapid regeneration of the surrounding forest. This has caused shading of the vines habitat the plant has suffered serious decline and had not been known to flower since 1946 although it has twice shown evidence of light flowering in the past 2 years.

## ETYMOLOGY

**speciosa**: Handsome

## WHERE TO BUY

Common in cultivation and readily available in most garden centres.

## CULTURAL USE/IMPORTANCE

The cauliflorous, long, tubular, cream flowers are typical of bat pollinated plants. However, bats have never been recorded from the Three Kings Islands (though they may once have been present). Nevertheless, the flowers of cultivated plants are pollinated by a large number of native and exotic birds.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange 23 October 2003. Description based on Allan (1961) supplemented with observations obtained from fresh material. This description subsequently published in de Lange et al. (2010)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R.; Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Christchurch, Canterbury University Press.

## CITATION

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/tecomanthe-speciosa/>