

Tecomanthe speciosa

COMMON NAMES

Tecomanthe, akapukaea

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, IE, OL, RF

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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.

SIMILAR TAXA

None. However, some species of *Pandorea*, and Jasmine (*Jasminium*) 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.

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 triregensis*), and pigeonwood (*Hedycarya arborea*).

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 such that the plant had suffered serious decline and had not been known to flower since 1946. However following pruning of the canopy and training the vine up cables it has twice shown evidence of light flowering since 1996. However, no seed has yet been set in the wild.



Auckland Botanic Gardens. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Great Island, Tasman Valley, October 1991. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.

GENUS

Tecomanthe

FAMILY

Bignoniaceae

AUTHORITY

Tecomanthe speciosa W.R.B.Oliv.

SYNONYMS

None

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Autumn to early winter

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.

EXTRA INFORMATION

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.

CULTIVATION

Common in cultivation and readily available in most garden centres.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

This plant has been featured as a Plant of the Month – see [Trilepidea: NZPCN newsletter for April 2004](#) for the full story.

ETYMOLOGY

speciosa: Handsome

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 38

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, IE, OL

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

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

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Critical

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

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.

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) Some of this factsheet information is derived from [Flora of New Zealand Online](#) and is used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand](#) licence.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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