

Thymus vulgaris

COMMON NAMES

culinary thyme

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small hairy shrub to about 30 cm high. Shoots and leaves densely clothed in hairs. The leaves are sessile and are up to 8 x 3 mm. The flowers are held on the ends of the stems in dense clusters, flowers range from white to mauve. The seeds are about 7 mm long and are dark brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

The stems and leaves are aromatic when crushed. *T. pulegioides* (creeping thyme) has a much more prostrate form.

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Forms dominate scrub in cold dry areas

GENUS

Thymus

FAMILY

Lamiaceae

AUTHORITY

Thymus vulgaris L.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September, October, November, December

YEAR NATURALISED

1926

ORIGIN

Mediterranean

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Agricultural

TOLERANCES

Very tolerant of cold and dry conditions.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial. Reproduces by seed (large amounts are produced). Dispersed by humans, gravity, soil movement.



In cult. ex Clyde. Nov 2008. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



In cult. ex Clyde. Nov 2008. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

NVS CODE

THYVUL

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/thymus-vulgaris/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026