

Tropaeolum majus

COMMON NAME

Nasturtium

FAMILY

Tropaeolaceae

AUTHORITY

L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

TROMAJ

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Disturbed sites, especially adjacent to gardens and dumps. Shrubland, herbfield, wetland, streamsides.

FEATURES

Scrambling or trailing, hairless, aromatic, annual or short-lived perennial, occ climbing to 2 m high. Stems succulent, to 10 m long, sap watery. Leaves distinctive, roundish shield-shaped, often slightly asymmetric, bluish below, up to 18-21 cm diam, with long stalk attached to back of leaf. Flowers solitary or 2-3 clustered, tubular, 4 cm diam, 5 irregular petals, scarlet orange or yellow, Oct- May. Seed capsule 3-sided, green, 10-14 mm long, succulent. Seeds caper-like.

SIMILAR TAXA

No species is easily confused with *T. majus* in NZ. Cultivated plants have many different flower colours.

FLOWERING

(January), October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May (December)

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, Yellow

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Reproduces primarily via vegetative spread and fragmentation but seeds are also produced. Dispersal is through garden dumping and clonal spread and birds may disperse seeds.

YEAR NATURALISED

1883

ORIGIN

N. Andes

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

Tolerates salt, wind, hot to cold, semi-shade, damp, physical damage, poor soils.



Tropaeolum majus. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



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FORAGING FOR NASTURTIUM

Click on the Radio New Zealand National logo to listen to This Way Up. Simon Morton interviews Johanna Knox about foraging for nasturtium (duration: 11'14").

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/tropaeolum-majus/>