

# Tropaeolum majus

## COMMON NAMES

nasturtium

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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.

## HABITAT

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

## GENUS

*Tropaeolum*

## FAMILY

Tropaeolaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Tropaeolum majus* L.

## FLOWERING

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

## 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, Licence: CC BY-NC.



*Tropaeolum majus*. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

### LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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.

### 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

TROMAJ

### MORE INFORMATION

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

### PDF DATE

25 May 2026