

# Tropaeolum speciosum

## COMMON NAMES

Chilean flame creeper

## BIOSTATUS

Exotic

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

## FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Climbing perennial, often to high canopy, usually hairless. Rootstock thick. Stems slender, usually with coiling tendrils to 7 cm long, watery sap. Leaves 5-fingered, each leaflet 10-35 x 5-16 mm. Flowers solitary, tubular, 15 mm diam, 5 irregular petals, bottom 3 petals with very slender claw 7-8 mm long, scarlet (occ rose), Nov-Apr. Seed capsule thinly fleshy, of 3 round parts, 1 or 2 often remaining small, 1 cm wide, deep blue.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Tropaeolum speciosum* is very similar vegetatively to *Tropaeolum pentaphyllum*. *T. pentaphyllum* only 2 upper petals developed, while *T. speciosum* has 5 more or less equal petals.

## HABITAT

Terrestrial. Mainly remnant stands of forest, also scrub, sometimes found in more remote forest clearings.

## GENUS

*Tropaeolum*

## FAMILY

Tropaeolaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Tropaeolum speciosum* Poepp. & Endl.

## FLOWERING

November, December, January, February, March, April

## FRUITING

December - March

## YEAR NATURALISED

1958

## ORIGIN

Chile

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental



Chilean flame creeper. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Chilean flame creeper. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

## TOLERANCES

Tolerant of warm-cold temperatures, salt, wind, many soil types, damp to dry.

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Perennial; produces seed. Fruit dispersed by birds.

## NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

**This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord.** The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

## 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

TROSPE

## MORE INFORMATION

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

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026