

# Vinca major

## COMMON NAME

Periwinkle

## FAMILY

Apocynaceae

## AUTHORITY

L.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

VINMAJ

## HABITAT

A widespread escape from cultivation naturalised in all districts. Waste places, particularly in the shade of trees by riverbanks, roadsides, cemeteries and around gardens.

## FEATURES

Stems glabrous, long and partly trailing or running and rooting at nodes, with terminal part often ascending, forming dense mats often covering many square metres. Petiole 7~20mm long; margins hirsute. Lamina 4~10 x 2.5~7cm, ovate, usually dark glossy green above, rarely variegated white and green; midrib hairy above; margins ciliate; base mostly rounded or subcordate, sometimes truncate or broad-cuneate; apex obtuse or acute, pedicels 2.5~4cm long, slender. Calyx .9~1.7cm long; lobes linear-subulate, ciliate, glandular towards base, Corolla tube approx. 1.5cm long; limb 3.5~5cm diam., mauvish-blue; lobes obliquely obovate; apex truncate or obtuse. Anthers slightly wider than long. Follicles 3.5~5cm long, the apical part very narrow and pointed, constricted between seeds. Seeds 7~8mm lon, oblong, strongly corrugated; margins inrolled. (Webb et. al., 1988) The plant has endless trailing and twining stems (Hilgendorf 1926), and glossy green leaves and beautiful pale blue salver-shaped flowers 2 -3 cm across (Hilgendorf 1926). A plant that forms a dense mat of long running, hairless stems with roots at the nodes (Department of Conservation 1996). The opposite leaves are oval, usually around 4 cm long, usually a dark glossy green and rarely variegated white and green (Department of Conservation 1996). The flowers are tubular and flat-lobed at the mouth to 5cm in diameter and are a mauvish blue (Department of Conservation 1996).

## FLOWERING

January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December

## FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple

## LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Reproduces by seed and vegetatively. Dispersed from dumping of garden waste, road machinery and soil disturbances along rivers. Stems sometimes root at tips.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1870



Hutt River. Jul 2005. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Vinca major. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

## ORIGIN

E. & C. Mediterranean

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

## TOLERANCES

A plant that is tolerant of shade, and moderately tolerant of dry or wet conditions.

## ETYMOLOGY

**major**: Greater

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/vinca-major/>