

Vitis vinifera

COMMON NAMES

grape

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Green

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Deciduous woody liane, climbing via tendrils (usually forked). The young shoots and leaves are greyish white or pale brown, mature leaves green above, whitish or pale grey tomentose below, up to 17x18cm, and coarsely toothed. The flowers are green and fragrant, berries 0.7-1.5cm diameter, black and sweet.

SIMILAR TAXA

Grapes are very distinctive plants. Only 1 species is recognised as naturalised in New Zealand, but many plants may not be *V. vinifera*. True *V. vinifera* has tendrils in every 3rd leaf. *V. labrusca* has tendrils in every node. Cultivated hybrids have been referred to as *V. labruscana* have intermittent tendrils.

HABITAT

Around old gardens and dump sites, sometimes along roadsides.

GENUS

Vitis

FAMILY

Vitaceae

AUTHORITY

Vitis vinifera L.

FLOWERING

October, November, December

YEAR NATURALISED

1870

ORIGIN

Mediterranean

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Agricultural

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

True *V. vinifera* is very susceptible to phylloxera. Reproduces mainly by stem layering (Webb et al., 1988). Fruit is freely produced but most wild spread is not by seed. Many of the cultivated grapes are actually hybrids which may affect spread from seed.



Vitis vinifera. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Growing over *Leptospermum scoparium*. Dome Valley, Northland. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 10/03/2007, Licence: CC BY.

ETYMOLOGY

vitis: Old Latin name for vine

vinifera: From the Latin vin and fero, meaning 'wine bearing'

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

VITVIN

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/vitis-vinifera/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026