

Pittosporum dallii

COMMON NAME

Kahurangi pittosporum

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Pittosporaceae

AUTHORITY

Pittosporum dallii Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

PITDAL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 24

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: CD, RR, RF

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: CD, RR

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: CD, RR

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Small tree with dark twigs bearing leathery leaves with teeth along the upper half of the margin, clusters of cream flowers and hard capsules inhabiting Northwest Nelson. Capsules 12mm long, longer than wide, splitting into two to show the black sticky seeds in an orange pith.

DISTRIBUTION

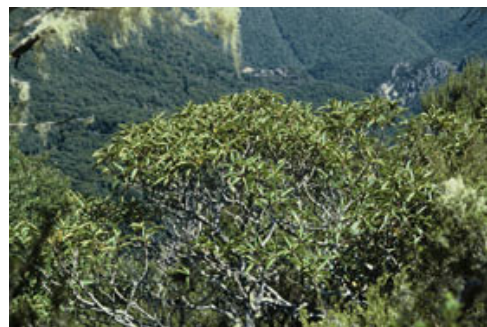
Endemic. South Island, where it is confined to North West Nelson. All known populations occur within the Kahurangi National Park and have a distribution centered on the Cobb and Takaka Rivers.

HABITAT

Silver beech (*Nothofagus menziesii* (Hook.f.) Oerst.) forest and subalpine scrub. Most (if not all) current occurrences are on or near cliff faces or walking tracks, locations less prone to the influence of browsing animals.



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



Cobb Ridge. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small spreading tree up to 4–6 × 3–4m, forming a broad canopy crown. Bark dark grey to grey-black. Branches stout, ascending to spreading. Branchlets initially purple-black to reddish-purple or brown, sparsely to distinctly puberulent, maturing grey, glabrate. Leaves alternate to subopposite or whorled, crowded toward branchlet tips; petioles stout, 3–20mm, initially sparsely puberulent, glabrate; lamina 50–100 × 20–40mm, oblong-elliptic, lanceolate, lanceolate-elliptic, rarely obovate, apex obtuse, acute or acuminate, base attenuate, cuneate or acute, margins coarsely serrate, subentire or entire, thickened, slightly revolute, dark green-brown to dark-green above, paler beneath, glabrous, coriaceous; midrib raised above and beneath, secondary veins evident, 14–18 either side of midrib. Inflorescences in condensed, terminal, compound umbels; peduncles subtended by a whorl of leaves and numerous caducous, glabrous, ciliate bud scales 15–22mm, peduncles and pedicels 4-angular, 10–20mm long, accrescent in fruit, white-tomentose, each peduncle bearing 1–6 pedicels, each subtended by caducous, glabrous, linear bracts up to 10mm long. Flowers night-fragrant, gynodioecious. Sepals 5.0–6.0 × 0.5–1.0mm, linear, glabrous; petals 8.0–9.0 × 3.0–3.5mm obovate, linear-oblong, obtuse, spreading from base, white or cream, sometimes with red stripes. Male flowers: stamens 4, filaments 7–8mm, cream, anthers 2–3 × 3mm, yellow, reflexed; gynoecium rudimentary or functional. female; flowers: stamens 4 rudimentary (often reduced to staminodes); ovary 1.5–3.3 × 0.5–1.5mm, globose to ellipsoid, glabrous; style c. 2mm; stigma truncate. Capsules in dense clusters, 15 × 9mm, ellipsoid, ellipsoid-oblong, 2-valved, valves green, greenish brown to black, coriaceous, deciduous, immersed in orange-yellow resinous pulp. Mucilage dark red or orange-yellow. Seeds 20–28, trigonal to irregular, lustrous dark red, held together by a persistent papery, cone-shaped endocarp, long after the valves have dropped.

SIMILAR TAXA

A very distinctive species, immediately recognised by the dark purple-black or reddish-purple stems, rather broad, lanceolate, dark brown green toothed leaves, and profuse clusters of creamy white flowers.

FLOWERING

November to December (-January)

FLOWER COLOURS

Cream

FRUITING

January to May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. Can be grown with some difficulty from semi hardwood cuttings. Grafts easily. A remarkably tough and resilient species which can tolerate extremes of drought and moisture. It makes an excellent shrub for a small garden but is rather slow growing, and can be fickle to flower. It does best, and is more likely to flower in cooler places and it should be planted in semi-shade.

THREATS

Threatened at all known localities by deer and possums browse.

ETYMOLOGY

pittosporum: Pitch seed

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from commercial garden centres. Plants are held by several specialist native plant nurseries.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 30 August 2006. Description adapted from Cooper (1956).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Cooper, R.C. 1956: The Australian and New Zealand species of *Pittosporum*. *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 43: 87-188

Patterson, J., Patterson, G. 1956. In search of *Pittosporum dallii*. *Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin*, 28: 14-23

Potts, N. 1947. Boulder Lake and *Pittosporum dallii*. *Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin*, 16: 2-3

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pittosporum-dallii/>