Carmichaelia crassicaulis subsp. crassicaulis

COMMON NAMES
coral broom

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION
Rare robust shrub with erect leafless thick blunt-tipped grooved branches. Branches to 1cm in diameter, tip oval in cross section, grooves filled with white fuzz. Flowers small, pea-like, pale pink, streaked with purple. Fruit a small dry hairy pod with a long curved tip and containing 1-3 hard yellow seeds.

FLOWER COLOURS
Cream, Violet/Purple

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Rigid shrub up to 2m tall. Branches stout, erect, yellowish-green, deeply grooved with numerous parallel hair-lined grooves. Branchlets similar but somewhat flattened, up to 1cm or more diameter, new growth densely covered in white hairs. Juvenile leaves almost round, adult leaves oblong. Plants nearly leafless when mature. Flowers creamy coloured, 6mm long, up to 20 in a tight cluster. Flower stalks and sepals covered in thick, soft, white hair. Seed pods 6-7mm long, rounded, usually one-seeded.

SIMILAR TAXA
Other Carmichaelia species. C. crassicaule has stout, erect, grooved branches, compressed one-seeded pods and tight bundles of flowers with woolly sepals.

DISTRIBUTION
South Island: east of the main divide.

HABITAT
Upland and subalpine grassland, scrub and rock.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: RF
Jump to previous conservation statuses

DETAILED TAXONOMY

GENUS
Carmichaelia

FAMILY
Fabaceae

AUTHORITY
Carmichaelia crassicaulis Hook.f. subsp. crassicaulis

Nenthorn. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

In flower. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

SYNONYMS
Corallospartium crassicaule (Hook.f.) J.B.Armstr.; Corallospartium crassicaule var. crassicaule (Hook.f.) J.B.Armstr.

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

ECOLOGY

FLOWERING
December - January

FRUITING
March - May

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Seeds are possibly dispersed by wind and granivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easy from fresh seed. Can be grown with some difficulty from semi hardwood cuttings. Dislikes humidity and once established should not be moved.

OTHER INFORMATION

WHERE TO BUY
Not commercially available.

ETYMOLOGY
carmichaelia: After Carmichael, a botanist

NVS CODE
CARCSC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 32

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: RF
2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: RF
2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: RF
2004 | Gradual Decline
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Otago: 2024 | At Risk – Regionally Declining | Qualifiers: NR, NStr, PF, RF, TL Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "Regional conservation status of indigenous vascular plants in Otago" Jarvie S et al. (2024) report.

REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Wellington, Government Printer.
Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange 28 October 2009. Description based on Allan (1961)

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carmichaelia-crassicaulis-subsp-crassicaulis/

PDF DATE

22 September 2025