

Teucrium parvifolium

COMMON NAMES

teucidium

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Rare shrub to 2m tall with yellowish wide-angled square branches bearing pairs of small rounded soft leaves and small white flowers inhabiting drier areas. Leaves 4-12mm long. Flowers with a few projecting curved filaments. Fruit dry.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A small-leaved shrub to 2 m. Young stems are orange or brown, square in cross-section and finely hairy. Leaves are in opposite pairs, round, dull green or brown-green; up to 12 mm long on stalks of equal length. Flowers are small (8 mm diameter), white (rarely bluish) with 5 irregular petal lobes. Fruit is a group of 4 seeds held within a persistent calyx.

SIMILAR TAXA

Small, round-leaved Coprosma species are similar, but easily distinguished by their round or oval stems, leaf domatia (or pits in the leaf near the midrib) and a small, pointed 'stipule' running across the stem between each leaf pair. Neomyrtus pedunculata has square stems, but they are hairless while the leaves are shiny and gland-dotted.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to New Zealand, occurring sporadically from Northland to Southland, but commoner in the east of both islands.

HABITAT

Along fertile stream sides and river terraces in lowland dry forest and podocarp-hardwood forest; occasionally on forest margins, clearings and amongst scrub.

THREATS

Forest clearance, rural development, stock and feral animal browse, invasive weeds.

GENUS

Teucrium

FAMILY

Lamiaceae

AUTHORITY

Teucrium parvifolium (Hook.f.) Kattari et Salmaki



Eastern Wairarapa. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 14/12/2013, Licence: CC BY.



Seed capsules, riparian community, Southland Plains. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 10/01/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SYNONYMS

Teucrium parvifolium var. *luxurians* Cheeseman,, *Teucrium parvifolium* Hook.f.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Long regarded as an endemic, monotypic genus *Teucrium*, recent phylogenetic studies have clearly established that the genus is better merged within an expanded concept of *Teucrium* (Salmaki et al. 2016).

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Flowering occurs from October to January.

FRUITING

Fruiting from December to March.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and semi-hardwood cuttings. A very hardy shrub which is tolerant of a wide range of habitats, soils types and moisture regimes.

CULTIVATION

Occasionally available from commercial nurseries. An attractive shrub which should be more widely grown.

ETYMOLOGY

parvifolium: Small-leafed

NVS CODE

TEUPAV

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 64

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp

2004 | Gradual Decline

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Endangered | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, NR, PF, RF, Sp 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 "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington.

Salmaki, Y.; Kattari, S.; Heubl, G.; Bräuchler, C. 2016: Phylogeny of non-monophyletic *Teucrium* (Lamiaceae: Ajuogoideae): Implications for character evolution and taxonomy. *Taxon* 65: 805–822

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Peter J. de Lange (August 2004). Description adapted from Allan (1961)

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NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/teucrium-parvifolium/>

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