

Coprosma intertexta

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Rubiaceae

AUTHORITY

Coprosma intertexta G.Simpson

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

COPINT

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Relict | Qualifiers: De, DP, RF, Sp

2004 | Sparse

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Bushy reddish wide-angled tangled shrub with very small needle-like leaves. Leaves 10mm long, often curved sideways, sometimes with tiny hairs on upper surface (lens needed), margin red. Very small hair-fringed triangular flap on stem between base of leaf pairs. Fruit small, white or pale blue.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, eastern from the Saxton River (Marlborough) south to Otago

HABITAT

A species of the Canterbury Plains and eastern South Island dry intermontane basins, where it usually grows in grey scrub overlying old moraines, coarse alluvium, boulder piles and or rock outcrops.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

Rarely is a hydrophyte, almost always in uplands (non-wetlands).



Coprosma intertexta at Danseys Pass. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Upper Manuherikia Valley. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dioecious, erect, somewhat fastigiate, extensively to sparingly branched, suckering shrub forming thickets up to 5 x 5 m. branches and branchlets fastigiate, filiraculate divaricate; branchlets at first finely puberulent becoming glabrous with age; bark initially pale-grey maturing dark brown. Leaves on short brachyblasts or in opposite pairs or near sessile fascicles. Interpetiolar stipules shortly-sheathing, broadly oblong triangular, obtuse with an attenuated apex surmounted by a single, deciduous apical denticle, denticles otherwise 3-6 all deciduous, outer surfaces finely ciliolate, undersides sparingly so, stipular collar-margins chartaceous when dry. Petioles slender 0.5-2 mm long. Leaves 7- 15 x 1-2 mm, dark grey-green to red-brown or purple-green, narrow-oblong to narrowly obovate-oblong, often slightly falcate, subacute, apiculate, margins initially puberulent, reddish; midrib and sometimes secondary veins evident.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to Coprosma species of New Zealand](#)

SIMILAR TAXA

Most similar to *Coprosma elatirioides* de Lange et A.Markey from which it differs by its upright, non-lianoid shrub habit, much thinner leaves with acute leaf apices, and white translucent fruits (often with dark blue streaks or flecks). The stipules of *C. intertexta* differ from *C. elatirioides* by the sparse or complete absence of hairs on the upper surface, their shortly sheathing nature (<1/4 the height of the whole stipule), by the stipule exceeding the sheath, and by its attenuated apex surmounted by a single terminal deciduous denticle. Either side of the apical denticle on the stipule sheath are 3-6 rather than 1-4 deciduous denticles. Finally the thin stipular collar-margins of *C. intertexta* are distinctly chartaceous rather than coriaceous when dry. *Coprosma elatirioides* is a species of open mesotrophic to oligotrophic wetlands and *C. intertexta*, which is completely allopatric from it, is a species of the drier, eastern intermontane basins where it mainly grows in grey scrub communities.

FLOWERING

October - February

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

FRUITING

July - December

LIFE CYCLE

Fleshy drupes are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed, semi-hardwood cuttings and rooted pieces (this species suckers)

THREATS

A local endemic with a naturally sparse distribution, perhaps most common in the inland basins of Canterbury and Otago.

ETYMOLOGY

coprosma: From the Greek kopros 'dung' and osme 'smell', referring to the foul smell of the species, literally 'dung smell'

intertexta: Intertwined

PLANT OF THE MONTH

This plant has been featured as a Plant of the Month – see [Trilepidea: NZPCN newsletter for August 2009](#) for the full story.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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* 11: 285-309.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/coprosma-intertexta/>

PDF DATE

17 September 2024