

Androstoma empetrifolium

SYNONYMS

Cyathodes empetrifolia (Hook.f.) Hook.f., *Styphelia taxifolia* Sleumer, *Styphelia androstoma* F.Muell. (nom. illegit.), *Styphelia hookeri* F.Muell. (nom. illegit.)

FAMILY

Ericaceae

AUTHORITY

Androstoma empetrifolium Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

ANDEMP

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 24

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low-growing sprawling reddish shrub. Leaves spreading, small, curved, appearing blunt, reddish or dark green above (somewhat pubescent), undersides 3-veined (veins parallel), white, pubescent. Flower small, white, tubular, single or in small clusters. Fruit fleshy, white, pink or red, ovoid

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island (from Te Moehau and Mt Pirongia south), South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands, Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku.

HABITAT

Coastal to alpine (montane to alpine in northern part of range otherwise extending to sea level). A species of open shrubland, tussock grassland, peat bogs and other poorly drained sites, as well as mixed alpine and subalpine herbfield. It is also frequently found on ridgelines on poorly draining, skeletal soils and on rock outcrops.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).



Te Moehau, March. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Auckland Islands. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Hermaphrodite, prostrate, semi-prostrate (decumbent) sometimes trailing, widely spreading woody shrubs up to 1.0 × 0.2 m. **Stems** spreading, brown, grey-brown or red-brown; branchlets red-brown, yellow-brown or brown, ribbed, pubescent. **Leaves** dark green, bronze-green, maroon adaxially, abaxially pubescent, alternate, evenly spaced, ± spreading, erect or reflexed, shedding along branchlets, and absent on main stems; petiolate, petiole erect, ± appressed, 0.5–0.9 mm long, glabrous; lamina linear, 2.3–4.8 × 0.6–1.1 mm, coriaceous, convex (rarely flat); apex obtuse surmounted by a minute callus; margin recurved, glabrous or ciliate; adaxially ± glossy, glabrous or finely pubescent; abaxially pubescent with hairs either confined to interveinal grooves or pubescent overall, striate, veins 3 parallel, conspicuous, abaxially strongly ribbed. **Inflorescences** terminal, 1–3-flowered, terminating in a rudimentary bud. **Flowers** pendulous, subtended by a single bract and 2 prominently keeled bracteoles, not pedicellate above bracteoles so appearing spicate; pedicel 0.4–1 mm long; bract, bracteoles, and sepals ovate or oblong, obtuse, glabrous or rarely puberulent outside; bract 0.5–0.9 × 0.5 mm, margin ciliolate; bracteoles non-imbricate, uniform in size, 0.8–1.5 × 0.7–1 mm, conspicuously striate particularly when dry, margin ciliate; sepals 1.3–1.9 × 0.8–1.1 mm, margin ciliate, bearing stomata on the adaxial surface (with a few present within hair-bearing clefts on the abaxial surface). **Corolla tube** ≤ calyx, thin, campanulate, 1.1–1.6 mm long, inner portion of tube glabrous; lobes spreading, acute, equalling the tube, 1.0–1.5 mm long, sparsely puberulent to puberulent towards apices. **Anthers** emarginate, 0.3–0.5 mm long, apically attached by a short thin filament inserted just below sinus of corolla tube; the filaments exerted, 0.3–0.5 mm long. **Ovary** 3–4-locular, spherical to ovoid, glabrous, 0.5–1.0 × 0.5–0.8 mm wide; style straight, glabrous, 0.5–0.8 mm long; stigma 0.1 mm long exerted. **Nectary** annular deeply lobed, occasionally comprised of distinct scales, these 0.2–0.4 mm tall, glabrous. **Fruit** red (occasionally white or pink), 2.0–3.0 × 1.5–2 mm, glabrous. **Endocarp** 1.6–2.3 × 1.6–2.1 mm, brown, orange to orange-brown, broadly elliptic to ovoid, obscurely 3-angled, often longitudinally ridged, somewhat granular.

SIMILAR TAXA

None.

FLOWERING

November–January

FRUITING

January–August

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Until recently *Androstoma* had been treated as a monotypic and endemic genus (Hooker 1844; Weiller 1996). In 2005 a further Australian (Tasmania) endemic species that had been variously referred to *Pentachondra*, *Trochocarpa*, *Styphelia* and *Leucopogon*, was transferred to *Androstoma* as *A. verticillata* (Hook.f.) C.J.Quinn (Quinn et al. 2005). *Androstoma empetrifolium* was treated as *Cyathodes empetrifolia* (Hook.f.) Hook.f. by Allan (1961)

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for the NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (19 November 2014). Description based on Weiller (1996), Quinn et al (2005), Webb & Simpson (2001) and observations made from fresh and dried specimens

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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- Weiller CM. 1996. Reinstatement of the genus *Androstoma* Hook.f. (Epacridaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 34(2): 179–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1996.10410681>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/androstoma-empetrifolium/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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