

Carpodetus serratus

COMMON NAMES

marbleleaf, putaputawētā, piripiriwhata

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Small tree with smallish round or oval distinctively mottled (hence common name) toothed leaves; branchlets zig-zag (particularly when young).

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Monoecious small tree up to 10 m tall. Trunk slender, bark rough, corky, mottled grey-white, often knobbled due to insect boring. Juvenile plants with distinctive zig-zag branching which is retained to a lesser degree in branchlets of adult. Leaves broad-elliptic to broad-ovate or suborbicular; dark green, marbled; membranous becoming thinly coriaceous; margin serrately toothed; tip acute to obtuse. Juvenile leaves 10-30 mm x 10-20 mm. Adult leaves 40-60 mm x 20-30mm. Petioles c. 10 mm; petioles, peduncles and pedicels pubescent; lenticels prominent. Flowers in panicles at branchlet tips; panicles to 50 x 50 mm; flowers 5-6 mm diam.; calyx lobes c. 1 mm long, triangular-attenuate; petals white, ovate, acute, 3-4 mm long. Stamens 5-6, alternating with petals; filaments short. Stigma capitate, tip dark; ovules many. Fruit an indehiscent subfleshy-fleshy capsule, 4-6 mm diam., black when mature; cupped in remains of calyx. Seeds many per capsule, in 3-5 locules, small, 1-2 mm long; testa reticulate.

SIMILAR TAXA

Not likely to be confused with any other NZ shrub or small tree. Perhaps most similar to juvenile kaikōmako (*Pennatia corymbosa*) which does not have mottled leaves and the leaves are only toothed in the top half (reminiscent of a ducks foot).

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Widespread. North, South and Stewart Islands.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (10-1000 m a.s.l.). Moist broadleaf forest, locally common in beech forest. A frequent component of secondary forest. Streamsides and forest margins.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

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DETAILED TAXONOMY

FAMILY

Rousseaceae



Mikimiki, Tararua Forest Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 06/01/1994, Licence: CC BY.



Mikimiki, Tararua Forest Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 06/01/1994, Licence: CC BY.

AUTHORITY

Carpodetus serratus J.R.Forst. et G.Forst.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ECOLOGY

FLOWERING

November-March

FRUITING

January-February (though dried fruit present at any time)

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

OTHER INFORMATION

EXTRA INFORMATION

This species is damaged by the burrowing larvae of the native puriri moth (*Aenetus virescens*). Caterpillars create burrows in the trunk and feed on cambium at the burrow entrance, creating characteristic diamond-shaped feeding scars. The caterpillar hides the web entrance with a silken web. Heavy feeding can weaken trees, in particular those with thin trunks. For more information about the life-cycle of the puriri moth and a list of other host species follow this [link](#) (Martin, 2010).

ETYMOLOGY

carpodetus: Fruit bound together (girdled)

serratus: Saw-toothed

NVS CODE

CARSER

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 30

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2024 | Regionally Not Threatened

REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961. Flora of NZ I. Government Printer, Wellington.

Martin, N.A. 2010. Puriri moth - *Aenetus virescens* fact sheet, retrieved from the website Interesting Insects and other Invertebrates.

http://nzacfactsheets.landcareresearch.co.nz/factsheet/OrganismProfile/Puriri_moth_-_Aenetus_virescens.html

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(4): 285-309.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Allan (1961), puriri moth information modified from Martin (2010).

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/carpodetus-serratus/>

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