

# Clematis cunninghamii

## SYNONYMS

*Clematis parviflora* A.Cunn, *Clematis hillii* Colenso

## FAMILY

Ranunculaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Clematis cunninghamii* Turcz.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

## NVS CODE

CLECUN

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 16

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Scrambling liane with pale green flowers, smooth-edged or with 1-2 sharp-tipped lobes leaves which are covered in brownish down when young

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island. South to Hawke's Bay in the east, to ?? in the west.

## HABITAT

Lowland forest and forest margins



Taiharuru, Coromandel, October. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Wellsford. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 10/11/2007, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Evergreen woody climber with main stems to 3 m or more tall; branchlets finely grooved, pilose when young. Leaves 3-foliolate, opposite; petioles c. 3 cm long, pilose-pubescent. Leaflets pubescent-pilose with fulvous hairs especially beneath; on petiolules c. 1 cm long; midvein and secondary veins visible above, more obvious below; leaflet lamina 1.5-4 x 1-2 cm, ovate, entire or crenately toothed or lobed, submembranous, dark green to yellowish-green, tip acute, base usually cordate, undersides paler. Juvenile leaves larger, thinner, irregularly lobed and sometimes serrate. Inflorescences unisexual, conspicuous, in axillary dichasial cymes, few-flowered, up to 8 cm long, inflorescence bracts linear-oblong, paired, united, inserted above middle of peduncle, fulvous. Flowers slightly fragrant. Male 1-2(-2.5) cm diam., sepals 5-8, narrow-oblong to elliptic-oblong, subacute, imbricate, glabrous above, hairy beneath, 9-12(-22) x 2-5 mm, yellowish; stamens many, anthers 0.7-1 mm long, filaments glabrous., up to 1 cm long. Female 5-8 sepals, imbricate, yellowish, glabrous above, hairy beneath, elliptic-ovate, 8-13(-15) x 2-3(-6) mm; staminodes few. Achenes hairy, elliptic, narrowed to apex, compressed, margin thickened and distinct, surface finely ridged, 2.6-3.4(-3.6) mm long, styles 20-26(-30) cm long at fruiting, white-plumose for most of length, short hairs at base.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to other climbing yellow-or green-flowered clematis species that have large leaves. It can be distinguished most easily from *C. foetida* by the strong pleasant smell of that species (and also by the hairy rather than downy sepals and petals). *C. forsteri* has young leaves that are either glabrous underneath, or occ. with white (rather than brownish) hairs (the anthers are also larger in this species).

## FLOWERING

September-November

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

November-January

## LIFE CYCLE

Pappate achenes are dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## ETYMOLOGY

**clematis**: From the Greek klema 'vine', alluding to the vine-like habit of many species

**cunninghamii**: Named after Allan Cunningham (1791-1839) who was an English botanist and explorer, primarily known for his travels to Australia (New South Wales) and New Zealand to collect plants. Author of *Florae Insularum Novae Zelandiae Precursor*, 1837-40 (Introduction to the flora of New Zealand).

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Allan (1961), Webb et al (1988), Eagle (2000) and Webb and Simpson (2001).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961. *Flora of New Zealand*. Government Printer, Wellington

Eagle, A. 2000. *Eagle's complete trees and shrubs of NZ*. Te Papa Press, Wellington

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

Webb, C.J. & Simpson, M.J.A. 2001. *Seeds of NZ gymnosperms and dicotyledons*. Manuka Press, Christchurch.

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. 1988. *Flora of NZ, Vol. IV*. DSIR, Christchurch

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/clematis-cunninghamii/>