

Vinca major

COMMON NAME

periwinkle

FAMILY

Apocynaceae

AUTHORITY

Vinca major L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

VINMAJ

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

A widespread escape from cultivation naturalised in all districts. Waste places, particularly in the shade of trees by riverbanks, roadsides, cemeteries and around gardens.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stems glabrous, long and partly trailing or running and rooting at nodes, with terminal part often ascending, forming dense mats often covering many square metres. Petiole 7~20mm long; margins hirsute. Lamina 4~10 x 2.5~7cm, ovate, usually dark glossy green above, rarely variegated white and green; midrib hairy above; margins ciliate; base mostly rounded or subcordate, sometimes truncate or broad-cuneate; apex obtuse or acute, pedicels 2.5~4cm long, slender. Calyx .9~1.7cm long; lobes linear-subulate, ciliate, glandular towards base, Corolla tube approx. 1.5cm long; limb 3.5~5cm diam., mauvish-blue; lobes obliquely obovate; apex truncate or obtuse. Anthers slightly wider than long. Follicles 3.5~5cm long, the apical part very narrow and pointed, constricted between seeds. Seeds 7~8mm lon, oblong, strongly corrugated; margins inrolled. (Webb et. al., 1988) The plant has endless trailing and twining stems (Hilgendorf 1926), and glossy green leaves and beautiful pale blue salver-shaped flowers 2 -3 cm across (Hilgendorf 1926). A plant that forms a dense mat of long running, hairless stems with roots at the nodes (Department of Conservation 1996). The opposite leaves are oval, usually around 4 cm long, usually a dark glossy green and rarely variegated white and green (Department of Conservation 1996). The flowers are tubular and flat-lobed at the mouth to 5cm in diameter and are a mauvish blue (Department of Conservation 1996).

FLOWERING

January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Reproduces by seed and vegetatively. Dispersed from dumping of garden waste, road machinery and soil disturbances along rivers. Stems sometimes root at tips.



Hutt River. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/07/2005, Licence: CC BY.



Vinca major. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

YEAR NATURALISED

1870

ORIGIN

E. & C. Mediterranean

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

A plant that is tolerant of shade, and moderately tolerant of dry or wet conditions.

ETYMOLOGY

major: Greater

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/vinca-major/>