

Rosa rubiginosa

COMMON NAMES

sweet brier

SYNONYMS

Rubus eglantheria

FAMILY

Rosaceae

AUTHORITY

Rosa rubiginosa L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

ROSRUB

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial. A plant of lowland habitats and sites with high fertility. A plant of tussock land, open sites, river flats, banks and terraces and stream sides. A plant of open, well-drained sites on roadsides, stabilised scree, steep open slopes and lakesides from s.l. to about 1000m a.s.l. The plant is often the dominant woody species, in habitats where it occurs and nearly always grows where other woody plants are rather sparse or absent. Areas at risk from the plant are pasture, low and disturbed forest, gullies and roadsides.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

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

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Deciduous, rather erect, sometimes dense shrub 1~3m high, often with suckers; stems mainly erect except in young plants, often with glandular hairs when young, otherwise glabrous; armature of few to numerous, unequal, flattened, moderately curved to strongly falcate prickles and pricklets, and sometimes acicles. Leaves with 2~3 pairs of leaflets; petiole 10~25mm long, finely tomentose and with glandular hairs and scattered pricklets; stipules completely adnate, generally clothed in very short glandular hairs, fringed with numerous small glandular hairs. Lamina of leaflets 12~40 x 8~28mm, broadly elliptic to elliptic-obovate, sometimes suborbicular, dull green and glabrous above, with numerous subsessile, pale glands beneath and with eglandular hairs on veins, sometimes hairs dense on midrib; margins generally 2-serrate, with glandular hairs; base rounded; apex acute or subacute, sometimes rounded. Flowers 1~3, single, 25~40mm diam.; pedicels usu. with many hispid glands. Sepals mainly persistent, lanceolate to ovate, long-acuminate or sometimes with an expanded apical tail, tomentose inside, densely clothed in stiff, spreading glandular hairs outside and on margins; outer sepals pinnatisect with a few linear to narrowly elliptic lobes. Petals 12~20mm long, obovate or cuneiform, pink or deep pink (esp. in bud) except for whitish base. Styles free, slightly exerted, densely hairy or villous. Fruit 12~22 x 10~18mm, broadly ovoid, ellipsoid, urceolate, ellipsoid-obovoid, subglobose or globose, occasionally narrow-ellipsoid, red or orange-red, usu. glabrous except at base, sometimes with dark red hispid glands. (-Webb et. al., 1988)



Galloway, Central Otago. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 25/12/2019, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Fruits, Glenorchy wetlands. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

A small bush with erect branches. The prickles are scattered and hooked. The prickles often have glandular hairs and bristles. The leaflets are glandular and aromatic giving off the scent of sweet briar (Hilgendorf 1926). A deciduous plant, often has suckers (Webb et. al. 1988). The 5-petalled flower is pink or deep pink and the hip is red or orange-red.

FLOWERING

November, December, January

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

February to May

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. The plant is partially or completely self-fertilised and forms new colonies of shoots through subterranean stem suckers which arise from strong rhizomatous roots. A plant that is able to regrow from suckers. The plant has a high seed output which is dispersed by birds, domestic stock and possibly possums (Glen et al., 2012).

YEAR NATURALISED

1867

ORIGIN

Europe

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

TOLERANCES

The plant is intolerant to shade and poor drainage. Fire temporarily reduces the vigour of the bush but encourages regrowth. An unpalatable shrub. Requires high soil fertility (Atkinson 1997).

ETYMOLOGY

rubiginosa: Rust-coloured

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Glen AS, Byrom AE, Pech RP, Cruz J, Schwab A, Sweetapple PJ, Yockney I, Nugent G, Coleman M, Whitford J. Ecology of brushtail possums in a New Zealand dryland ecosystem. *New Zealand Journal of Ecology* (2012) **36(1)**: 29- 37

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/rosa-rubiginosa/>

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