

Lupinus polyphyllus

COMMON NAMES

Russell lupin

FAMILY

Fabaceae

AUTHORITY

Lupinus polyphyllus Lindl.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

LUPPOL

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Establishes in waste places and lowland areas, streams, riverbeds and disturbed montane to subalpine areas.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Herbaceous perennial; stems sparsely to moderately hairy, erect, branched from base. Leaflets 8~15, usu. glabrous above, sparsely to moderately sericeous below, narrowly elliptic to oblanceolate, acute to acuminate, 30-130 x 10-30 mm; stipules oblong-lanceolate, 15~35 mm long. Infl. 15-60 cm tall, many-flowered; peduncle up to 15 cm long. Lower flowers alternate; upper flowers subverticillate; pedicels 5-14mm long. Calyx densely hairy; upper lip shallowly 2-toothed; lower lip slightly longer, entire. Corolla blue, purple, pink, orange, yellow or white, often of 2 colours, slightly scented if at all, 12-20 mm long. Pod densely villous, 5-10-seeded, 30-50 mm long; seeds ellipsoid, smooth, dark brown and somewhat mottled, approx. 2 mm long. (Webb et al., 1988)

FLOWERING

September, October, November, December, January, February

FLOWER COLOURS

Lilac, Purple, Red/Pink, White, Yellow

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. Non vegetatively spreading perennial with some plants reaching 50 years (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Germination of seed occurs in autumn and spring (ibid.). Seed is produced at 200-1 000 kg/ha. Seeds remain viable for 10 or more years (ibid.). Explosive mechanism, humans, tourists, waterways (particularly in floods) (ibid.).

YEAR NATURALISED

1958

ORIGIN

N. America



Kinlock. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Seed pods, Omarama, Canterbury. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 03/01/2012, Licence: CC BY-NC.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental; now seriously invasive in South Canterbury, especially in gravel river beds and on road verges. See article on [NZ Geographic magazine](#).

TOLERANCES

Highly tolerant of frost and poor drainage; slightly tolerant of shade and intolerant of drought. Can resprout from the base after physical damage and grazing (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995).

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

POISONOUS PLANT

The seed are poisonous if they are chewed or crushed before eating.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/lupinus-polyphyllus/>

PDF DATE

17 September 2024