Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata

COMMON NAMES
African olive

BIOSTATUS
Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS
Not applicable

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS
White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Dense bushy shrub or small tree to approx. 7m high; bark becoming rough. Shoots angular, lepidote when young. Leaves shortly petiolate. Lamina 5~11 x .8~2cm, lanceolate or narrow-elliptic, sparsely to densely lepidote beneath and appearing pale green or slightly silvery, dark green and lepidote or elepidote above; base sttenuate; apex mucronate. Panicles axillary. Calyx 1~1.5mm long; lobes broad-triangular, glabrous or somewhat lepidote. Corolla lobes 3~4mm long, whitish, generally oblong, almost fleshy, patent at first, ultimately reflexed. Stamens slightly < corolla. Drupe 5~8mm diam., globose to broad-ovoid, glossy, becoming red and ultimately black. (- Webb et. al., 1988)

SIMILAR TAXA
A dense bushy tree or shrub that grows up to 7 m in height with scaly leaves, that are usually opposite, lanceolate or narrow-elliptic (rounded at both ends, widest in the middle) to 11 cm. The leaves are pale or slightly silvery beneath and dark green above. The flowers are small, 4-12 lobed and whitish. The stone fruit is round and from 5-8mm in diameter and a glossy green becoming red and then black.

HABITAT
Terrestrial. It is light demanding so will be found in light gaps or at the forest edge (West, 1996). The plant grows in open coastal shrub and modified areas near native forest margins. The plant grows on inshore and offshore islands. A plant of open scrub, forest margins and coastlines.

GENUS
Olea

FAMILY
Oleaceae

AUTHORITY
Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata (Wall. ex G.Don) Cif.

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
Dec-Jan

YEAR NATURALISED
1956 (Raoul Island); 1961 (mainland NZ)

ORIGIN
E. Africa southwards to Cape Province South Africa.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION
Agricultural

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Perennial. The seed is dispersed by birds and possible possums.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Cameron, Ewen K 2017. Naturalised African olives (Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata) in New Zealand. Auckland Botanical Soc. Journal 72(1): 71-76.

ATTRIBUTION
Cameron, Ewen K 2017. Naturalised African olives (Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata) in New Zealand. Auckland Botanical Soc. Journal 72(1): 71-76.

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/olea-europaea-subsp-cuspidata/

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