

Laurus nobilis

COMMON NAMES

Bay tree, laurel

FAMILY

Lauraceae

AUTHORITY

Laurus nobilis L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

LAUNOB

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Persistent cultivation relic, can invade intact bush, waste land and scrub.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Large dioecious shrub or small tree to about 7 m. Usually multi-stemmed with smooth trunks, stems and leaves hairless. The leaves are aromatic (especially when crushed) petiole up to 13 mm long often purplish. Lamina to about 13 x 4.5 cm, narrow elliptic with a slightly wavy margin. Male flowers are yellow while female flowers are white and are on separate plants. Fruits are black berries.

SIMILAR TAXA

Has been confused with *L. azorica*. *L. nobilis* is reported to have shorter petioles and is less hairy, but there may be considerable overlap.

FLOWERING

September, October, November

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

LIFE CYCLE

Reproduces by seed and suckers. Many of the trees in cultivation are male, so spread only by suckers. Where females are present many seeds are produced. Dispersed by birds and people.

YEAR NATURALISED

1983

ORIGIN

Mediterranean

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental, culinary

TOLERANCES

Very shade tolerant.



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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](#).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/laurus-nobilis/>

PDF DATE

17 September 2024