

Dichondra micrantha

COMMON NAME

Mercury Bay weed

FAMILY

Convolvulaceae

AUTHORITY

Dichondra micrantha Urb.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

DISTRIBUTION

North Island: North. Auckland (Kawau Island) to Wellington; **South Island:** Christchurch.

HABITAT

Widely planted as a lawn in warmer parts of New Zealand and in many places it has thrived and spread naturally to a limited extent.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial herb, with most parts densely hairy; hairs white, ± appressed, forked. Stems stoloniferous, freely branching, purplish, forming extensive mats or low cushions to 5 cm high. Lf internodes 1-2 cm long; petioles erect or nearly so, to 6 cm long, short on very exposed stolons. Lamina (5)-10-30 mm diam., suborbicular to reniform, membranous, glabrous or nearly so and dull above, with appressed hairs below; veins raised beneath, not impressed above; base broad-cordate; apex rounded or slightly emarginate. Peduncles 5-15 mm long, bract very small and inconspicuous. Calyx c. 2 mm long, densely hairy outside; lobes alternately linear-oblong and ovate-oblong, obtuse to subacute. Corolla 4-5 mm diam., greenish white, lobed to c. 1/2 way; lobes narrow-oblong to lanceolate, = calyx lobes at anthesis, becoming > calyx lobes. Anthers violet or violet-margined. Ovary densely hairy. Capsule usually deeply 2-lobed, with 1-(2) seeds per loculus, 2-2.5 × 4-5 mm, more rarely only 1 locule developed, indehiscent, slightly to strongly hispid, > calyx. Fruiting calyx to 3 mm long, fruiting peduncle recurved. Seeds c. 1.5 mm long, yellow to dark brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

Disistinguished from the native *Dichondra* by the glabrous to glabrate leaves and the habit - found in urban lawns.

YEAR NATURALISED

1978

ORIGIN

West Indies, S. North America



In pavement, Mt Eden Auckland. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 02/10/2022, Licence: CC BY.



In pavement, Mt Eden Auckland. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 02/10/2022, Licence: CC BY.

ETYMOLOGY

dichondra: Two seeds

micrantha: Tiny flower

This name may be incorrectly used for the exotic *Dichondra* in New Zealand. Previously referred to as the indigenous *D. repens*.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (3 October 2022). Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, and Features sections copied from Webb et al. (1988).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Webb C.J., Sykes W.R., & Garnock-Jones P.J. (1988). *Flora of New Zealand Volume 4*. DSIR, Botany Division.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dichondra-micrantha/>