

Corokia cotoneaster

COMMON NAME

korokio, wire-netting bush

FAMILY

Argophyllaceae

AUTHORITY

Corokia cotoneaster Raoul

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

CORCOT

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 18

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Common variable shrub with zig-zag thin grey twigs bearing clusters of small leaves that are white underneath with a dented or rounded tip and on a dark flattened leaf stalk. Flowers yellow, star-shaped. Fruit red.

DISTRIBUTION

North, South and Three Kings Islands.

HABITAT

Lowland shrubland, river-flats and rocky places throughout.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

UPL: Obligate Upland

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



Cotoneaster. Photographer: Wayne Bennett, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Close up of leaves and fruit. Photographer: Wayne Bennett, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Much-branched shrub up to 3 m or more tall. Branchlets rigid, divaricate; bark dark, rough. Leaves of seedlings obovate-spathulate, often elongate and 3-lobed. Leaves of adults varying in size according to exposure, alternate or in alternate fascicles, obovate-cuneate to obovate-oblong to suborbicular, obtuse, emarginate or not; lamina dark or coppery green above, silvery white beneath, 2-15 x 2-10 mm, on flattened petiole up to 20 mm long. Flowers axillary and terminal, solitary or in fascicles of 2-4; 5-8 mm diameter, numerous per plant. Calyx-segments 1-1.5 mm long, ovate-triangular, pubescent on backs; petals bright yellow, usually 5, approximately 4-5 mm long, narrow oblong-ovate, acute to subacute, pubescent on backs. Drupes red or orange or yellow, 5-8 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Helichrysum lanceolatum can closely resemble *Corokia* in the absence of flowers or fruit. *Helichrysum* lacks the distinctive zigzagging of stiff, dark branchlets, and has paler green, duller, thinner leaves with pointed rather than blunt or indented tips.

Olearia odorata has opposite leaves or leaf clusters and fluffy seeds.

Olearia capillaris has wavy or crinkle-cut edges to the leaves, fawn, peeling bark, and fluffy seeds.

Olearia polita has opposite leaves or leaf clusters, two ridges (lens helpful) along the young branchlets, and fluffy seeds.

FLOWERING

(September-) October-December (-April)

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

FRUITING

February-May (-September)

LIFE CYCLE

Fleshy drupes are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

ETYMOLOGY

corokia: From the Maori name korokio or korokia-tarango

cotoneaster: from Latin cotneum, meaning 'quince', and the suffix -aster meaning 'imperfectly resembling'.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Corokia is a small genus of three species occurring naturally only in New Zealand. *C. cotoneaster* hybridises with the larger leaved *C. buddleioides* where the two species grow together, and some of the hybrid forms are popular as garden plants.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Allan (1961) and Wilson & Galloway (1993).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Wellington: Government Printer. pg. 441.

Moorfield, J. C. (2005). Te aka : Maori-English, English-Maori dictionary and index. Pearson Longman: Auckland, N.Z.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 11: 285-309.

Wilson, H. D., & Galloway, T. 1993. Small-leaved shrubs of New Zealand. Manuka Press. pg. 182-184.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/corokia-cotoneaster/>