



## *Myrsine umbricola*

### Common Name(s):

Tararua matipo

### Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Vulnerable

### Distribution:

Endemic. At present known only from the southern portion of the Tararua Ranges, in the North Island. However, it was only recognised as distinct in 2003, plants having been previously regarded as shade forms of *M. divaricata* A.Cunn., a species with which *M. umbricola* is widely sympatric. As past literature refers to *M. divaricata* as a widespread species of the Tararua Ranges, it is probable that these records may in part refer to *M. umbricola* as well. *Myrsine umbricola* should also be looked for in similar habitats in the Ruahine Ranges.

### Habitat:

Silver beech (*Nothofagus menziesii* (Hook.f.) Oerst.) cloud forest from c.800-1200 m. Growing on terracettes, colluvium and around the margins at the bases of rotational slump scars.

### Features\*:

Dioecious, shrub up 4 x 4-5 m. Trunks 1-5, these slender. Branchlets horizontal, somewhat spreading. Branchlets, non-divaricating, spreading to upright, usually crowded and leafy. Adult leaves 11-22 x 7-11 mm, dark green, glossy, usually with a narrow brown blotch at lamina base, obovate, oblong-obovate, leaf entire apex entire or slightly retuse. Flowers axillary, solitary or in fascicles of 2-4. Female flowers sparse, often solitary, with 4 sepals and 4 petals, petals free, 1.3-1.6 x 1-1.1 mm, broadly elliptic, light green, cream or flushed maroon at margins. Style 0.2 mm, stigma 0.6-0.8 x 0.6-0.8 mm, stamens rudimentary. Male flowers solitary or in fascicles of up to 4. petals 4(-5), 2-2.5 x 1.4-1.6 mm, obovate, stamens with anthers 1.1-1.4 x 0.6-1 mm, gynoeceum rudimentary. Fruit a circular purple or violet drupe 3.4-5.3 x 3.4-5.2 mm.

### Flowering:

August-September

### Fruiting:

October-August

### Threats:

Locally abundant but most populations seen comprise adult plants only. Seedlings are scarce, and those that have been found show clear signs that they are browsed heavily by deer. Because the known populations are small, several are close to or already moribund, recruitment is virtually absent, and at some sites hybrids outnumber pure plants, *M. umbricola* is regarded as seriously threatened. Since its formal description in December 2004, further populations have been found though none are large or free from the same threats.

### \*Attribution:

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2009). Description based on Heenan & de Lange (2004) - see also de Lange et al (2010).

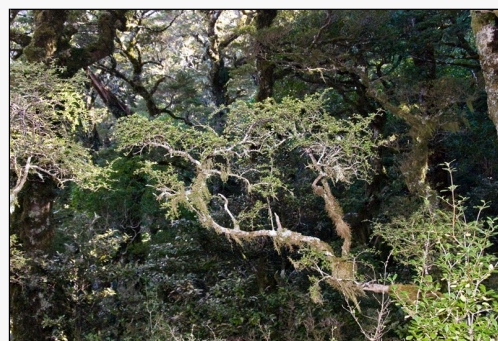
### References and further reading:

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R.; Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch.

Heenan, P.B.; de Lange, P.J. 2004: *Myrsine aquilonia* and *M. umbricola* (Myrsinaceae), two new species from New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 753-769

### For more information, visit:

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=1012](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1012)



**Caption:** Mount Holdsworth, Tararua Range. Apr 2011.

**Photographer:** Jeremy Rolfe



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