



Podocarpus nivalis

Common Name(s):

Mountain totara, snow totara

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: North and South Islands from Mt Hikurangi and Mt Pirongia south.

Habitat:

Montane to alpine (virtually confined to subalpine and alpine areas in the North Island). Common in open tussock grassland, subalpine scrub and herbfield, at the base of active scree, amongst boulderfalls and on cliff faces and razorback ridges. Sometimes extending down into beech (*Nothofagus* forest) and down into valley heads.

Features*:

Prostrate to suberect, spreading woody shrub forming broadly domed patches up to 1.5 × 3.0 m. Trunk usually indistinct (mostly obscured by branches), slender, solitary (sometimes several arising from base). Branches numerous, spreading with slender trunk, branchlets densely leafy. Leaves bronze-green, dark green, sometimes dark wine-red or bronze-purple, closely spaced, spirally arranged, erect or sub-patent, rigid, coriaceous; lamina 5-15 × 2-4 mm, linear-oblong, ± subulate, obtuse, apex ± apiculate, margins distinctly thickened, midvein prominent. Male strobili axillary, solitary or up to 4 per peduncle; peduncle 3-5 mm long, strobilus 5-15 mm long, apiculus obtuse. Female branchlet axillary, peduncle 3 mm. long, receptacle 2.5-10.0 mm long, red, elliptic-oblong to obovate-oblong, slightly compressed, smooth, swollen (fleshy). Seeds solitary or paired, 3.5-7.0 mm long, green when fresh, ovoid or ellipsoid-ovoid, weakly asymmetric, obtusely pointed.

Flowering:

September - November

Fruiting:

December - June

Threats:

Not Threatened

*Attribution:

Factsheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 4 January 2012. Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb & Simpson (2001).

References and further reading:

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I, Wellington, Government Printer.

de Lange, P.J. 1998. Two interesting plant records from Mt. Pirongia western Waikato. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal*, 53: 66-69

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2001: Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons. Christchurch, Manuka Press.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=1175



Caption: Mount Ruapehu.

Photographer: © John Braggins



Caption: Podocarpus nivalis

Photographer: Wayne Bennett