



Carmichaelia vexillata

Common Name(s):

dwarf broom

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Declining

Distribution:

Eastern South Island to South Canterbury and Otago.

Habitat:

Recent moraines, alluvium, river terraces, terrace risers, disturbed soils, and soils derived from schist parent material.

Features*:

Dwarf, spreading broom, up to 15cm tall, 40cm wide. Stems stout, curved upwards or horizontal. Branchlets linear, 20-95mm long, 1.5-4mm wide, finely grooved, may be sparsely hairy when young, hairless at maturity; green-yellow, tips often red in winter. Simple leaves on seedlings and occasionally on mature plants, 4-7.5mm long, 2-4.5mm wide, with scattered hairs on both surfaces; leaves on flattened stems usually reduced to a hairless triangular scale. Flowers 4-5.5mm long, 2-2.5mm wide, in clusters of 2-3; purple with whitish margins, sometimes cream with purple veins; main petal upright and taller than lower petals, sepals hairless, tip of sepal long and pointed. Pod oblong, compressed, dark brown to black or light grey. Seeds 4-13 per pod, oblong, yellow to olive green with black mottling.

Flowering:

October to March

Fruiting:

November to May

Threats:

At threat from weeds and browsing animals which inhibit flowering and fruit set. However, it must be recognised that without browsing animals many of the habitats occupied by this broom would vanish due to weed regrowth. This species survival now requires a delicate balance of allowing some browsing to reduce weeds but not too much which will damage or even kill *Carmichaelia*.

*Attribution:

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 August 2003. Description based on Heenan (1995)

References and further reading:

Heenan, P. B. 1995: A taxonomic revision of *Carmichaelia* (Fabaceae-Galegeae) in New Zealand (part I). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 33: 455-475.

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* 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=121



Caption: Pods and seeds
Photographer: John Barkla



Caption: Ashburton Lakes
Photographer: Jane Gosden