



## *Solanum americanum*

### Common Name(s):

small-flowered nightshade

### Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

### Distribution:

Indigenous. Kermadec, Three Kings, North, South and Chatham Islands. In the North Island locally common to about the Bay of Plenty and Taranaki scarce otherwise. In the South Island reported from Nelson, Marlborough, North Canterbury and Westland. Uncommon on the Chatham Islands. Abundant on northern offshore islands especially the Kermadec Islands. Present also in Australia, Africa, India, south-east Asia and the Pacific.

### Habitat:

Usually coastal but also found inland in open forested situations up to about 400 m a.s.l. Occasionally an urban weed. *S. americanum* is the typical *Solanum* of northern offshore islands where it grows in great abundance on the richly manured, frequently disturbed ground of petrel colonies, and may on occasion form dense thickets.

### Features\*:

Small, annual to perennial bright-green to purple-green herb up to 1 x 1 m but usually much less. All parts glabrous to glabrescent except on occasion on very young growth. Branches and branchlets usually unarmed though sometimes furnished on the flanges with sparse blunt-ended hooks. Petioles to 50 mm long. Cauline leaves 40-100 x 15-55 mm, usually bright green rarely dark green, ovate, ovate-oblong to lanceolate-ovate, entire or distally coarsely toothed to lobulate, sometimes sinuate; base cuneate, broad-cuneate or attenuate, rarely cordate to truncate; apex more or less acute, sometimes acuminate. Flowers in few-flowered umbels. Peduncles 20 mm long, slender; pedicels up to 5 mm long, more or less pendent, markedly deflexing at fruiting. Calyx < 2 mm long, accrescent; lobes very narrowly elliptic to ovate, reflexed at fruiting. Corolla 5-8 mm diameter, stellate, white, pale mauve, glabrous; lobes triangular. Anthers 1.0-1.5 mm long, yellow. Fruit a berry 5-8 mm diameter, globular, glossy black to purple-black, stone cells present, often copious. Seeds 1.0-2.5 mm long, semi-glossy buff to pale orange-yellow or dark yellow, obovate to broadly obovate, sometimes circular, asymmetric, strongly compressed.

### Flowering:

October - April

### Fruiting:

November - June

### Threats:

Not Threatened

### \*Attribution:

Fact Sheet prepared for the NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 12 May 2006. Description by P.J. de Lange with some elements based on Allan (1961) and Webb et al. (1988).

### References and further reading:

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

Manoko, M.L.K.; van den Berg, R.G.; Feron, R.M.C.; van der Weerden, G.M.; Mariani, C. 2007: AFLP markers support separation of *Solanum nodiflorum* from *Solanum americanum* sensu stricto (Solanaceae). *Plant Systematics and Evolution* 267: 1-11.

Webb CJ, Sykes WR, Garnock-Jones PJ 1988. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV. Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch.

### For more information, visit:

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=2262](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2262)



**Caption:** Hutt River Trail, north of Stokes Valley.

**Photographer:** Jeremy Rolfe



**Caption:** Umbel of flowers; forest edge, Bushy Park, Whanganui

**Photographer:** Colin Ogle