



Aponogeton distachyos

Common Name(s):

Cape pondweed

Current Threat Status (2009):

Exotic

Distribution:

Widely naturalised, though apparently lost from some northern sites. Some locally abundant populations in coastal and lowland NI localities. Occurs in SI at Blenheim in Marlborough, in some lakes in Canterbury and Westland, near Dunedin and near Lake Te Anau.

Habitat:

Still and flowing water bodies.

Features*:

Cape pondweed has a basal globose (nearly spherical) tuber, 3-4 cm in diameter. Floating leaves are basal, pale to dark green, up to 25 cm long, narrow-lanceolate in shape, and with many distinctive cross veins. Submerged leaves are linear in shape. The tuberous rootstock has a ring of long soft roots and fibrous remains from petioles. Flowers are on a two-forked spike with fleshy white lobes and are very fragrant. The terminal spikes (ca 6 cm long) protrude above the water and have a tubular spathe that sheaths the inflorescence and falls off at an early stage. Flowers are sessile (no stem) in two rows and fragment at the base of the bract-like extensions of the spike axis. These bract-like extensions enlarge (ca 1cm) and become reddish at fruiting. Seeds are ca 9 mm long with a green spongy outer testa. Seedlings have terete/circular leaves and progressively acquire miniature oblong leaves. When only a few centimetres high the seedling develops its characteristic basal tuber, and the testa remains attached to the seedling for a considerable period.

Flowering:

Predominantly December, but spring to autumn.

Fruiting:

Autumn

*Attribution:

Factsheet prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).

References and further reading:

Champion et al (2012). Freshwater Pests of New Zealand. NIWA publication.

<http://www.niwa.co.nz/freshwater-and-estuaries/management-tools/identification-guides-and-factsheets/freshwater-pest-species>.

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Coffey BT, Clayton JS (1988). New Zealand water plants: a guide to plants found in New Zealand freshwaters. Ruakura Agricultural Centre. 65pp.

Popay et al (2010). An illustrated guide to common weeds of New Zealand, third edition. NZ Plant Protection Society Inc, 416pp.

Johnson, A. T., Smith, H. A. (1972). Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning. Landsman Bookshop Ltd: Buckenhill, UK.

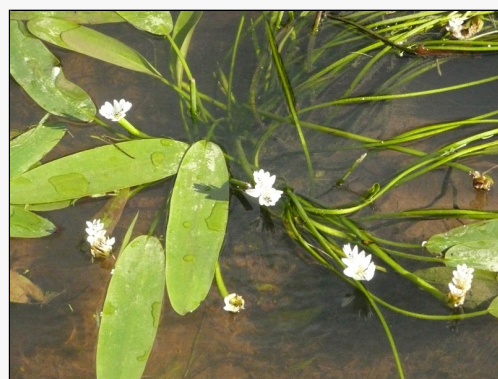
For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2541



Caption: Flowers of *Aponogeton distachyos*

Photographer: Rohan Wells, NIWA



Caption: Flowers and foliage of *Aponogeton distachyos*

Photographer: Rohan Wells, NIWA