



Linum catharticum

Common Name(s):

purging flax

Current Threat Status (2009):

Exotic

Distribution:

Locally common throughout.

Habitat:

Wet grassland, dunes, margins of waterbodies, often in areas that are seasonally dry.

Features*:

Slender biennial herb up to 30-(35) cm high. Stems glabrous, simple to much-branched at base. Stem lvs always opposite, glabrous, oblong to narrowly elliptic-obovate, usually obovate at base of stem, obtuse to acute, 1-veined, entire, (3)-5-12-(15) mm long; lvs subtending infl.-branches single or paired, similar to stem lvs but shorter, narrower and sometimes acuminate. Infl. of few to numerous fls in a diffuse compound dichasium; sepals elliptic, acuminate, glandular, ciliate, 2-3 mm long, slightly < or \pm = to capsule; petals white, about 2 \times as long as sepals, 3.5-5 mm long; styles free to base. Capsule glabrous, globose, dehiscent, 2-3 mm diam.; seeds boat-shaped, shiny light brown, c. 1 mm long.

Flowering:

October to April

Fruiting:

Summer and autumn

*Attribution:

Prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA).
Features description from Webb et al., (1988).

References and further reading:

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. (1988). Flora of New Zealand Volume 4: Naturalised pteridophytes, gymnosperms, dicotyledons. Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=3418



Caption: Flower of *Linum catharticum*

Photographer: Trevor James (AgResearch)



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