



Erica lusitanica

Common Name(s):

Spanish heath

Current Threat Status (2009):

Exotic

Habitat:

Terrestrial. A plant of coastal, lowland and montane habitats (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Plant grows in sites with low - moderate fertility (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). The plant occurs in areas with moderate to high rainfall and also where the soil is acidic (Wilson & Galloway 1993). The plant is found in scrub and forest margin, shrubland, tussockland, herbfield and fernland (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). The plant occurs in rough pasture, shrubland and scrub (Wilson & Galloway 1993).

Features:

Erect shrub to about 2m high, occasionally with a trunk > 15cm diam. Shoots densely covered with short hairs, especially when young; hairs simple, of varying lengths. Leaves in whorls of 3~4, subsessile, 3~7mm long; margins revolute and contiguous, entirely concealing undersurface; apparent or false margin sometimes with sparse hairs giving a serrulate appearance, otherwise glabrous. Flowers in lateral racemes; racemes usually densely arranged so appearing as a large terminal panicle. Pedicels about 2mm long, recurved. Bracteoles situated near base, < 1mm long, generally linear, whitish, not reaching calyx. Calyx 1~1.5mm long; lobes triangular-ovate, glabrous, white, 2~3x length of tube. Corolla 3~5mm long, tubular-campanulate, white except for rose or pink flush outside in bud, glabrous; lobes very short, very broadly ovate, erect to spreading. Stamens included; anthers approx. 1mm long, dark maroon; awns whitish, echinate, 1/2 ~ 2/3 length of anther. Style slightly exserted; stigma obconic. Capsule about 3mm long, broad ellipsoid, glabrous. (- Webb et. al., 1988)

Flowering:

March, April, May June,
July, August, September,
October, November,
December

Fruiting:

Germinable seed present
in capsules in early spring
(Timmins & MacKenzie
1995).

References and further reading:

Webb C.J., Sykes W.R., Garnock-Jones P.J. 1988. Flora of New Zealand Volume IV. Botany Division, D.S.I.R., Christchurch. 1365 p.

Wilson H.D., Galloway T. 1993. Small-leaved Shrubs of New Zealand. Manuka Press, Christchurch. 305 p.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=3911



Caption: Lower Hutt. Jul 2013.

Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



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