



Rhabdothamnus solandri

Common Name(s):

New Zealand gloxinia, taurepo, kaikaiatua, mata, matata, waiuatua

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Endemic monotypic genus. North Island and adjacent offshore islands. From Te Pahi (North Cape) south to Manawatu Gorge, thence disjunct to just north of Pauatahanui Inlet, Porirua Harbour and at Smiths Creek near Makara, Wellington.

Habitat:

Coastal to lowland and lower montane. Mostly a rupestral species in forest though it will extend into shrubland. *Rhabdothamnus* is especially common in the lowland karst of the western Waikato where it is a prominent shrub along the many limestone gorges, outcrops, and cave entrances of that area. Although more common in coastal and lowland situations *Rhabdothamnus* can occur well inland in situations where frost is limited, such as along the banks of the Waikato River (near Mangakino)

Features*:

Shrub up to c. 2 m. tall. Branches numerous, compact, rather brittle, grey-brown to grey, scabrous sparsely to densely hairy. Branchlets slender, oppositely arranged with branches, densely leafy or not, scabrous, densely covered in indumentum of 0.2-0.4 mm long, dark red-brown to pallid, stiff, strigose, conical, multi-celled hairs. Leaves, dark green, yellow-green to grey-green, ± coriaceous to cartilaginous, often rather brittle, midrib and veins distinct, lamina surfaces densely covered in semi-appressed to patent, dark red-brown to pallid, strigose, 0.5-0.8(-1.0 or more) mm long hairs; petioles 3-10(-15) mm long, slender, densely covered in scabrid hairs, brittle. Lamina (0.5-)10-20-50(-65) × (0.6-)15-30-50(-60) mm, broad-ovate, suborbicular to orbicular, margins coarsely serrate-dentate. Flowers solitary, nodding, 20-25(-40) mm long, ciliate, usually orange, but sometimes yellow, purple or pink, longitudinally striped by 12-14(-20) red or dark orange veins; pedicels 10-40 mm long, slender, purple, densely pilose-hairy, hairs pallid. Calyx 10-15 mm long, pilose, calyx lobes 6-9 mm long, ovate, deltoid to triangular-acuminate. Corolla tube 10-20 mm long, subcampanulate to funnelform; corolla lobes 5-10(-20) mm long, broadly ovate, to oblong, apex obtuse to rounded erecto-patent to spreading. Stamens 4, 12-14(-20) mm long, adnate to corolla tube, filaments slender, incurved above, dark red, glabrous; anthers cruciately paired, 0.8-1.4 mm long, pollen cream. Staminode 10-12 (-18 m) mm long, adnate to corolla tube. Disk small, annular. Ovary ovoid, bilocular. Style curved at apex, 11-13 (-19) mm long, filiform, red; stigma small, obconic, apex bilobed. Capsule 6.5-7.2(-11.4) mm long, invested by persistent calyx, ovoid, tapered to apex; placentae thick, bilobed; seeds numerous, 0.4-0.6 mm long, ellipsoid or obovoid, test reticulate, glabrous, dark red-brown.

Flowering:

Throughout the year but peaking between October and February

Fruiting:

Throughout the year

Threats:

Not Threatened. However seed set in this bird-pollinated species is often minimal on the mainland (see Anderson et al. 2011).

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (12 October 2008). Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb & Simpson (2001), and based in part on fresh plants and herbarium material.

References and further reading:

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

Anderson, S.H.; Kelly, D.; Ladley, J.J.; Molloy, S.; Terry, J. 2011: Cascading effects of bird functional extinction reduce pollination and plant density. *Science*: DOI: 10.1126/science.1199092

Webb, C.J. & Simpson, M.J.A. 2001. Seeds of NZ gymnosperms and dicotyledons. Manuka Press, Christchurch.



Caption: Tamahunga, Omaha
Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Caption: Stigma and stamens.
Tamahunga, Omaha
Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

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