Carmichaelia muritai

Common Name(s):

coastal tree broom

Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Endangered

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island, Marlborough, vicinity of Clifford Bay

Habitat:

Deeply eroded coastal cliffs on coarse, free draining gravel and loess, colluvial fans below cliffs.

Features*:

Leafless tree 5-6 m tall. Trunk, stout up to 250 mm diam. Branches numerous, grey-brown, uppermost erect, lower drooping. Bark smooth with raised rings at nodes. Branches compact, striate, deeply grooved, flat to round, 3.5 mm wide, grey-green maturing yellow-green, densely hairy, bearing stipules at emergent shoots. Leaves reduced to scales on mature shoots. Inflorescences lateral, erect, racemes up to 70 mm; solitary or in groups on flowering shoots arising at nodes. Flowers 4 x 4 mm. Peduncles hairy, 0.8 mm long; pedicels 1 mm, hairy. Calyx rim and outer tube hairy. Petals white with purple-violet markings toward standard and keel; veins of petals violet; standard suborbicular, longer than wings, margins reflexed; wings dolabriform, obtuse. Fruit a stramineous upturned, obliquely obovate 3.5 x 1.8 mm, greyish-white, pod. Seeds 1(-2) per pod, yellow-green, reniform, 1.5 x 1 mm.

Flowering:

Fruiting:

December - January

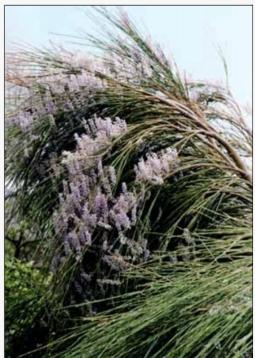
Present throughout the year

Threats:

Only two small natural populations are known. One is seriously threatened by goats, summer drought, coastal erosion and weeds. The other though thriving is vulnerable to fire. All parts of C. muritai, though the seedlings especially, are highly sought after by browsing animals such as possums, goats, sheep, rabbits and hares.

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 October 2003. Description adapted from Purdie (1985) - see also de Lange et al. (2010).



Caption: Photo of flowering branch Photographer: Jan Clayton-Greene



Photographer: Barbara Mitcalfe

References and further reading:

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R.; Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Christchurch, Canterbury University Press. 471pp.

Purdie, A.W. 1985: *Chordospartium muritai* (Papilionaceae) a rare new species of New Zealand tree broom. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 23: 157-161

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=8