



Lophomyrtus obcordata

Common Name(s):

Rohutu

Current Threat Status (2018):

Threatened - Nationally Critical

Distribution:

Endemic. North and South Islands. Patchy and often absent over large parts of the country. More common in the eastern North and South island though locally prominent in some parts of western Northland and Auckland.

Habitat:

Coastal to montane in forest - though mostly found in coastal and lowland forested habitats. *Lophomyrtus obcordata* is often rather local over large parts of its range though it seems to be reasonably common on the Pouto and Kaipara Peninsula where it grows on stable sand dunes in a forest dominated by an as yet unnamed species of *Kunzea ericoides* (known as rawirinui to northern Maori and referred to by de Lange & Murray 2004, de Lange et al., 2005 and de Lange et al. 2010 as *Kunzea* aff. *ericoides* (a)). *Lophomyrtus obcordata* is also occasionally dominant in alluvial forest remnants of the eastern South Island. In these places it is often parasitised by the dwarf mistletoe *Korthalsella lindsayi*.

Features*:

Shrub up to c.6 m tall. Trunk slender, up to 0.2 m diameter. Bark greyish pink, chartaceous, flaking in large, irregular shards, underbark pale cream. Branches numerous, erect, compactly branched to spreading. Branchlets initially 4-angled maturing subterete, rather brittle, minutely pubescent. Leaves opposite (sometimes in fascicles), coriaceous, puberulent when young (hairs patent), becoming glabrous with age, glandular punctate, oil glands colourless, leaf lamina and petioles shortly decurrent with branchlet; petiole 0.7-1.0 mm long, brittle; leaf lamina 5-12 × 5-10 mm, obcordate, cuneately narrowed to base, adaxially dark green to grey-green (sometimes tinged red), paler beneath (sometimes tinged pink). Flowers 4-merous, 6-8 mm diameter, borne in axillary, solitary monads on slender, 10-14(-20) mm long, pubescent pedicels. Hypanthium subturbinate, not extending beyond ovary summit, glandular punctate, oil glands colourless (rarely pink tinged), calyx lobes 4, 1.0-1.8 mm long, persistent, spreading, pubescent, oblong, acute. Petals 6-8 × 5-8 mm, suborbicular, white, margins entire to slightly irregular, oil glands colourless. Stamens 60-80(-100 or more), free, in 4 weakly defined whorls, filaments 6-8 mm long, anthers cream, dorsifixed, latrorse. Ovary inferior, 2-3-locular, ovules numerous, in a single row on each linear placenta. Style 6-8 mm long, slender, white, stigma capitate, scarcely dilated. Fruit a broadly ovate, bright to dark red (rarely black or violet) 6-7 mm long berry. Seeds numerous, reniform, 2.0-4.3 mm diameter, testa pale brown, glossy ± smooth, very hard.

Flowering:

November - March

Fruiting:

January - May

Threats:

Seriously threatened by the arrival of myrtle rust in NZ. Conservation status amended in 2017, as per reference in 'Attribution' below

*Attribution:

Fact sheet including description prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 9 February 2011. Seed description modified from Webb & Simpson (2001). Conservation status amended on 25.10.19 by C C Ogle, following <https://www.doc.govt.nz/Documents/science-and-technical/nztc22entire.pdf>

References and further reading:

de Lange, P.J.; Murray, B.G. 2004: Chromosome numbers of New Zealand *Kunzea* (Myrtaceae). *Australian Journal of Botany* 52: 609-617.

de Lange, P.J.; Datson, P.M.; Murray, B.G.; Toelken, H.R. 2005: Hybridism in the *Kunzea ericoides* complex (Myrtaceae): an analysis of artificial crosses. *Australian Systematic Botany* 18: 117-131.

de Lange, P.J.; Smitsen, R.D.; Wagstaff, S.J.; Keeling, D.J.; Murray, B.G.; Toelken, H.R. 2010: A molecular phylogeny and infrageneric classification for *Kunzea* (Myrtaceae) inferred from rDNA ITS and ETS sequences. *Australian Systematic Botany* 23: 309-319.

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2001: Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons. Christchurch, Manuka Press.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=943



Caption: Bark. Upper Hutt, eb 2011.
Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Caption: Stevensons Island, Lake Wanaka.
Photographer: John Barkla