

NZ Myrtaceae Key - Online edition

Kunzea ericoides (A.Rich.) Joy Thomps.

Common Names

kānuka, manuea, manuoa

Origin

New Zealand.

Cultivation

As recently defined (de Lange 2014), *K. ericoides* is uncommon in cultivation.

Distribution

Northern South Island of New Zealand north of and including the Wairau and Buller River catchments.

Distinguishing Features

- Branchlets often drooping at ends.
- Branchlets hairy, then becoming hairless (see *K. robusta*).
- Leaves typically bright green.
- Leaves linear, linear-lanceolate, to very narrowly lanceolate, to 25 mm long (see *K. linearis*).
- Leaf surfaces hairless except for sparse occurrences on margins, lower (abaxial) midrib normally hairless.
- Leaves mostly crowded on short side branches (brachyblasts = spur shoots).

Habit

Mostly trees up to 18 m tall, branches often drooping at ends.

Bark and Stem/Trunk

Initial bark brown to grey-brown, usually firmly attached, flaking readily with age. Branches slender, tips often drooping. Branchlets appearing hairless, but sparsely covered in very small erect hairs (20× magnification to see).

Leaves

Leaves alternate, linear to linear-lanceolate to very narrowly lanceolate, ± 4–25 mm long, 0.5–2 mm wide, bright green to yellow-green, same colour on upper and lower surface, hairless except for margins and lower portions of adaxial midrib; leaf surfaces not puckered; margins entire; tips acute; leaf stalks absent.

Flowers

Flowers borne in compact clusters, sometimes (usually toward the end of the flowering season) extending into elongated clusters up to 60 mm long; flowers stalked, ± 4–8 mm in diam., petals 5, white, orbicular, oil glands not evident when fresh, ± colourless; sepals 5, tips free, persistent; stamens 10–34, white, longer than petals. Main flowering period: late spring to early autumn.

Fruit

Fruit dry, 5-locular, ± 2–4 mm wide, flat-topped when valves closed, rarely persistent.

Similar Species

Easily distinguished from all other members of New Zealand *Kunzea* by the almost hairless branchlets sparsely furnished with minute erect hairs. The bright green, finely, linear-lanceolate leaves and smallish flowers with low stamen numbers also help to identify this species.

Notes

Kunzea ericoides has a 2018 conservation status of Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable.

Endemic to New Zealand as circumscribed by de Lange (2014), but currently still listed as an accepted name on the Australian Plant Census (APC).

The genus *Kunzea* also occurs in Australia, where it is represented by more than 50 species of which three (*K. ambigua*, *K. baxteri*, *K. parvifolia*) are cultivated occasionally in gardens in New Zealand; another nine species are recorded as having been included in research trials or as rare garden occurrences.

External Links

- Flora of New Zealand Online
- GBIF
- iNaturalist NZ
- NZPCN

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