

Coprosma wallii in the upper Waimakariri valley

Mike Harding and Susan Walker

During a walk up the Waimakariri valley in early August 2021 we unexpectedly found two trees of *Coprosma wallii* Petrie. This small population is not recorded at this location in Burrows (1986), Wilson (1991), the Allan Herbarium Systematics Collection Data (SCD) website, or the NZPCN (and iNaturalist) website, so it may be a new distribution record for the species. The closest documented records of *C. wallii* are Andrews Shelter (Nick Head, pers. comm.), the confluence of the Poulter River (SCD), and “Hawdon-Andrews” (Burrows 1986).

This small population is located on the south (true-right) side of the Waimakariri valley alongside the first small stream up-valley from the Jordan Stream fan (Turkey Flat) (Fig. 1). The two trees lie either side of that stream on recent alluvial deposits. One tree is at the margin of the extensive valley-side mountain beech (*Fuscospora cliffortioides*) forest; the other within tall scrub near the forest margin.



Figure 1. Upper Waimakariri valley showing location of two *Coprosma wallii* trees (red dots left).

The down-valley, forest-margin *Coprosma wallii* is a small tree, approximately 3 m tall, located at map reference (NZTM) 1479880E-5237323N. The up-valley *C. wallii* is a larger specimen, approximately 5 m tall, at map reference 1479775E-5237438N (Fig. 2, p. 40). This spreading tree has several trunks partially buried by recently deposited stream debris (Fig. 3, p. 40). It lies at the edge of tall scrub dominated by *Coprosma propinqua*, *Discaria toumatou* and *Corokia cotoneaster*.

Identification of the trees was by the characteristic growth form, size, red cambium, and leaves (neither had fruit). A specimen has been lodged at the Allan Herbarium (Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research). *Coprosma wallii* is listed as an At Risk (declining) species (de Lange et al. 2018).

This *Coprosma wallii* population is only 90 metres from the well-used tramping track up the Waimakariri valley. The apparent lack of an earlier record indicates the cryptic character of this species. It is possible the species is present elsewhere in the valley; we did not undertake a thorough search.



Figure 2. Up-valley *Coprosma wallii* tree.



Figure 3. Trunks of the up-valley *Coprosma wallii* tree.

References

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