

I first noticed *Juncus imbricatus* in Cornwall Park in January 2001, but it arrived there well before then, the earliest herbarium record being AK 240669, *A.E. Esler*, 21 May 1999. It also occurs on Mt St John, and there are previous collection records in Auckland going back to 1983. Apart from being difficult to uproot, *J. imbricatus* is distinguished by its relatively short stature (mostly 30-45 cm tall), tussocky habit,

its terminal inflorescence, and the large (up to 5 mm long), shining, reddish-brown seed capsules (Fig. 4).

#### Acknowledgements

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#### References

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## *Leptospermum morrisonii* 'Copper Sheen'

Mike Wilcox

In 1976 Mike Geenty, manager of the Hamilton City Council Nursery, introduced seeds of several *Leptospermum* species from Australia. Amongst seedlings from a seedlot labelled *L. nitidum* he noticed one with foliage having a wine-red colour, and selected it out. He called it *Leptospermum* 'Copper Sheen', and it was propagated by cuttings at Lynndale Nursery, Auckland (Noelyn Parr, pers. comm.). It became popular as a street tree in Auckland, and has been widely grown as a garden ornamental and street tree, usually sold as *Leptospermum nitidum* 'Copper Sheen' or just *Leptospermum* 'Copper Sheen'.

The New Zealand 'Copper Sheen' does not resemble the Tasmanian tea tree *Leptospermum nitidum*, which is a low compact shrub with leaves 8-20 mm long x 3-6 mm wide. Furthermore, a reddish-leaved cultivar, *Leptospermum nitidum* 'Copper Sheen' is grown in Australia, and it likewise does not resemble the New Zealand 'Copper Sheen'. The Australian *Leptospermum* 'Copper Sheen' is also thought to be a seedling sport that arose in cultivation in the 1960s. This cultivar grows to ca. 2 m tall by 2 m wide. The young foliage is a bronzy-purple in colour and the young stems are reddish. The fragrant flowers have creamy-yellow petals with a greenish centre and are ca. 25 mm in diameter. The older leaves are ca. 25 mm long by 5 mm broad. The Australian *L.* 'Copper Sheen' differs from the more typical form of *L. nitidum* in the bronzy-purple colour of the new growth, the spreading nature of the new growth and the creamy-yellow flowers. Indeed the Australian *L.* 'Copper Sheen' is now thought to be a cultivar of a related species – *Leptospermum turbinatum* from the Grampian



Fig. 1. *Leptospermum morrisonii* 'Copper Sheen' beside the duck pond, Auckland Botanic Gardens, 30 Dec 2012. All photos by the author.



Fig. 2. *Leptospermum morrisonii* 'Copper Sheen', 210 Manukau Road, Epsom, Auckland, 18 June 2012.



**Fig. 3. *Leptospermum morrisonii* 'Copper Sheen', Mays Road, Te Papapa, Auckland, 28 May 2012.**

Mountains, Victoria – rather than *L. nitidum*. Another reddish-leaved *Leptospermum* cultivar in Australia is *Leptospermum polygalifolium* 'Copper Glow', a shrub with bronze-green small leaves, up to 20 mm long x 2 mm wide.

So, what is the correct identity of the New Zealand 'Copper Sheen'? From the descriptions given by Joy Thompson in her 1989 monograph on *Leptospermum* in Australia, *Leptospermum morrisonii* from New

South Wales is the best fit. It is a bushy tree to 5 m in height, leaves up to 35 mm long and 8 mm wide, of variable size. Red-leaved cultivars of this are sold in Australia as *Leptospermum morrisonii* 'Burgundy' (selected in 1991), and *L. morrisonii* 'Copper Glow', and the same cultivars are grown in Hawaii. At the time Mike Geenty unwittingly introduced it, *L. morrisonii* would have been included in *L. polygalifolium*. There are large specimens at the Auckland Botanic Gardens (Fig. 1). The largest specimens found in Auckland are at 210 Manukau Road, Epsom – two trees 10 m tall, with treble trunks each to 50 cm in diameter (Fig. 2). Mays Road in Te Papapa is a good example of it as a street tree (Fig. 3). It flowers from December to mid-January (Fig. 4). The capsules are comparatively large (Fig. 5).

Wilcox (2012) opted to call the Auckland tree *L. morrisonii* 'Burgundy', which it resembles very closely, but our tree, as pointed out by Dawson (2012), is an independent, earlier selection. Robust trees to 8 m tall of the normal green-leaved form of *L. morrisonii* are not uncommon in Auckland gardens, but the more usual form cultivated is the red-leaved variety which, to reduce the risk of confusion with Australian cultivars, should go under the name here of *Leptospermum morrisonii* 'Copper Sheen' (as proposed by Dawson 2012), thus retaining the cultivar name bestowed on it by Geenty.



**Fig. 4. *Leptospermum morrisonii* 'Copper Sheen' flowers, 6 Scott Ave, Mangere Bridge, 8 Dec 2012.**



**Fig. 5. *Leptospermum morrisonii* 'Copper Sheen' capsules, 210 Manukau Road, Epsom, Auckland, 18 June 2012.**

#### References

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