

**Khasia berry**

*Cotoneaster simonsii* Hort. ex Baker (Rosaceae)

**What is it?**

*Cotoneaster simonsii* is native to the Himalayas and east India. It was introduced to Tasmania as an ornamental on account of its hardiness and striking display of berries during the autumn and winter months. In Australia, it is naturalised in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. In Tasmania, It was first recorded as a garden escape in 1985. Three other species of *Cotoneaster* are also naturalised in Tasmania, these are *C. glaucophyllus*, *C. pannosus* and *C. franchetii*.



*Cotoneaster simonsii*  
Photos by Matt Baker

**What is its weed potential?**

The berries of the naturalised *Cotoneaster* species are very conspicuous and are readily eaten by birds. This has facilitated their spread from cultivation. In Tasmania, *C. simonsii* is one of the most invasive of the four species. It is most common on the West Coast where it is found in a wide range of habitats including wet sclerophyll forest, coastal woodland, button grass plains, and on river banks. In some areas on the West Coast, it is locally common and populations in excess of 200 plants have been observed. It is also recorded in the Midlands the North West and East Coast of Tasmania.

**What does it look like?**

*Cotoneaster simonsii* is a semi deciduous shrub which can grow to a height of 4 m. The leaves (up to 30 mm long and 15 mm wide), which are sometimes arranged distichously, are variable in shape but are usually rhombic or ovate. The apex of the leaves is acute to apiculate. The upper surface of the leaves is glossy, dark green and sparsely pubescent, while the lower surface is pale green and more densely pubescent. The flowers occur in groups of 1–5. Each flower consists of 5 small, triangular sepals and 5 petals (2–3 mm long), which are white with pink markings. The fruit (c. 10 mm long) is a small, orange-red berry (actually a pome) and contains 3–4 nutlets (pyrenes).



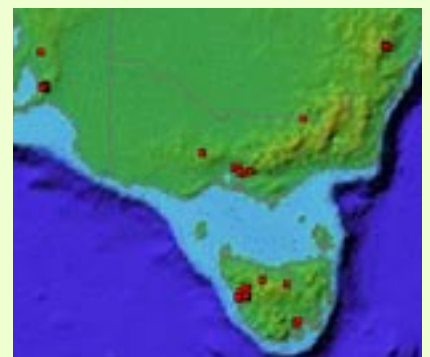
**WEED PROFILE**



**Matthew Baker**  
WEED TAXONOMIST,  
TASMANIAN HERBARIUM

**Key to Cotoneaster in Tasmania**

- 1. Inflorescence more than 20-flowered; leaves usually more than 30 mm long . . . . . ***C. glaucophyllus***
- 1: Inflorescence less than 20-flowered; leaves usually less than 30 mm long . . . . . 2
- 2. Leaves sparsely hairy on lower surface, lamina visible between the hairs; fruit with 3–4 pyrenes . . . . . ***C. simonsii***
- 2: Leaves densely hairy on lower surface, lamina obscured by the hairs; fruit with 2–3 pyrenes . . . . . 3
- 3. Petioles 4–8 mm long; petals white, spreading; fruit with 2 pyrenes. . . . . ***C. pannosus***
- 3: Petioles 3–4 mm long; petals white to pinkish, erect; fruit with 2–3 pyrenes . . . . . ***C. franchetii***



*Distribution of Cotoneaster simonsii*  
Source: Australia's Virtual Herbarium