

## *Myoporum* Banks

*Myoporum laetum* Forst. f., NGAIO. Tree or shrub, evergreen, highly branched, 3–10 m tall; shoots gland-dotted, glabrous. **Stems:** cylindric, 3.5–4 mm in diameter on new growth, ± rigid, green with minute pits in surface from glands, becoming olive-green with reddish purple or brownish on exposed areas, rough and cracked on second-year growth. **Leaves:** helically alternate, simple, petiolate, without stipules; petiole channeled, 5–18(–30) mm long, channel groovelike; blade ± elliptic to lanceolate, 40–110 × 10–42 mm, long-tapered and somewhat oblique at base, entire on margins or sometimes entire below and shallowly serrate above midblade, ± satiny, densely translucent-glandular (when backlighted) with recessed gland pores. **Inflorescence:** reduced cyme, axillary, 1–8-flowered, distichous, with the oldest flower next to stem, lacking bracts; pedicel compressed, at anthesis 8–15 mm long. **Flower:** bisexual, weakly bilateral, 11–16 mm across; **calyx** 5(–6)-lobed, green; tube cup-shaped, 0.2–1.5 mm long; lobes ± equal, acuminate, 1.4–4 mm long, persistent around fruit; **corolla** 5(–6)-lobed, bell-shaped, white with magenta spots on throat and lobes; tube 2–2.5 mm long, white with green streaks or greenish, glabrous, filled with nectar; throat 2.5–3.5 mm long, internally villous to pilose with scattered long, white hairs; lobes roundish, 3–4.2(–5) × 3.5–5 mm, cupped on lower surface and convex on upper surface, spreading to recurved, with numerous long hairs on upper surface; **stamens** 4, fused to lower corolla tube, exerted; filaments tapered to tip, 4.5–6.2 mm long, white, glabrous; anthers dorsifixed, dithecal, before anthesis ∩-shaped, 1.5–1.8 mm long, pinkish to light brown, longitudinally dehiscent; pollen whitish or pinkish; **nectary disc** fused to ovary base, ringlike to saucerlike, producing copious nectar; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, ± bell-shaped with 3–4 rounded angles, 2–2.5 mm long, green, glabrous, 3–4-chambered, each chamber with 1 ovule; style exerted, 4–6 mm long, lower portion tannish to brownish with radiating white hairs, upper portion curved, white; stigma shortly 3-lobed or 4-lobed, whitish, papillate, not positioned close to stamens. **Fruit:** drupe, ovoid, 7–9 mm long, pale to dark purple; pulp whitish to watery pink; stone almond-shaped, yellowish. Early December–early August.

Naturalized. A small tree from New Zealand commonly planted along the coast, where fog is common. *Myoporum laetum* has a dense evergreen canopy that achieves a compact shape with minimal care. It is moderately resistant to salt spray and is therefore used to landscape public parks and streets near the coast. The juicy, purple fruits are consumed by birds, which thereby disperse the stones to nearby sites, where the tree has become established. *Myoporum laetum* currently is an invasive species along the edges of salt marsh at Point Mugu, where it has escaped from base plantings, and Malibu Lagoon. Most other records of naturalized specimens of *M. laetum* are within a few kilometers of Pacific Coast Highway. Several specimens have been collected at inland sites, e.g., Wildwood Park in the western Simi Hills, where it was probably planted, but generally it does not persist in inland sites because this species is frost sensitive. A dwarf selection, having decumbent shoots and smaller leaves (30–70 × 10–20 mm), is being used for landscaping of coastal slopes in Malibu and also inland along highways.

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