

# Wahlenbergia pygmaea subsp. pygmaea

## COMMON NAME

North Island harebell

## SYNONYMS

Wahlenbergia pygmaea Colenso; Wahlenbergia pygmaea subsp. tararua J.A.Petterson

## FAMILY

Campanulaceae

## AUTHORITY

Wahlenbergia pygmaea Colenso subsp. pygmaea

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 36$

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (main axial ranges from the Huiaurau to Tararua Ranges and adjacent Volcanic Peaks (except Mt Taranaki).

## HABITAT

Montane to alpine. Common in herbfield, tussock-grassland, on lava fields, and rocks. Usually above the forest line but extending down rivers.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial rhizomatous herb with rosulate tufts of leaves at ground level. Leaves bright green, glossy, glabrous or with a few scattered hairs, petiolate; lamina spatulate,  $10 \times 3$  to  $20 \times 5$  mm, 2 mm wide. Leaf margins sparsely toothed, usually red-tinged. Flowers usually insect-pollinated, some forms self-fertile; erect or nodding on short upright scapes, 40–100 mm tall, which may be naked or 1–2-bracted. Corolla soft blue, or blue and white; up to 30 mm diameter, up to 18 mm long, broadly campanulate with tube as broad as or broader than long, lobes  $c.9 \times 7$  mm, spreading, broadly elliptic-lanceolate, acute. Calyx lobes  $c.3.0 \times 1.5$  mm, glabrous, narrow-triangular. Capsule  $c.10 \times 6$  mm, glabrous, domed cylindrical to plump barrel-shaped. Seeds ellipsoid, glossy brown.



Mangatepopo, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Desert Road. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 30/11/2008, Licence: CC BY.

### SIMILAR TAXA

Differs from subsp. *drucei* by its geographic isolation; by its spatulate leaves whose leaf margins are sparsely toothed and often red-tinged; and by the flowers which are soft blue, white or blue and white

### FLOWERING

December – May

### FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, White

### FRUITING

January - May

### PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from tip cuttings and the division of whole plants. Fresh seed germinates readily.

### ETYMOLOGY

**wahlenbergia**: Named in honour of Wahlenberg, a Swedish botanist and author of *A Botany of Lapland*.

**pygmaea**: Tiny

### WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

### TAXONOMIC NOTES

*Wahlenbergia pygmaea* seems only doubtfully distinct from the earlier named South Island endemic *W. albomarginata*, and many botanists regard them as conspecific. This requires further study. In the interim *Wahlenbergia pygmaea* subsp. *tararua* is here treated as part of *W. pygmaea* subsp. *pygmaea* because the morphological distinctions attributed to it by Petterson (1997) are variable and fall within the range of variation seen in *W. pygmaea* subsp. *pygmaea* north of the Tararua Ranges.

### ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange 12 June 2007. Description adapted from Petterson (1997).

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Petterson, J.A. 1997: Revision of the genus *Wahlenbergia* (Campanulaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 35: 9-54.

### NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wahlenbergia-pygmaea-subsp-pygmaea/> (Date website was queried)

### MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wahlenbergia-pygmaea-subsp-pygmaea/>