Astelia nervosa

COMMON NAMES
mountain astelia

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Not Threatened
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Monocots

FLOWER COLOURS
Brown, Red/Pink

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Undersides of leaves often showing zigzag ‘tracks’ caused by feeding of the larvae of the ‘astelia zigzag moth’ (http://www.monarch.org.nz/monarch/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Autumn13_03.pdf)

DISTRIBUTION
A. nervosa may be confined to the South and Stewart Islands; North Island plants have greener leaves with a brownish/bronze indumentum on the abaxial (lower) surfaces and these may constitute an unnamed taxon.

GENUS
Astelia

FAMILY
Asteliaceae

AUTHORITY
Astelia nervosa Hook.f.

SYNONYMS
Astelia nervosa var. montana Kirk ex Cheeseman; Astelia montana (Kirk) Ckn.; Astelia cockaynei Cheeseman

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Fleshy berries are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING
FACU: Facultative Upland
Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

Mt Peel, Cobb, December. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

Leith Saddle, Dunedin. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

ETYMOLOGY

astelia: Stemless
nervosa: With conspicuous veins

NVS CODE

ASTNER

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 210

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309
http://www.monarch.org.nz/monarch/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Autumn13_03.pdf (for life history of astelia zigzag moth)

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/astelia-nervosa/

PDF DATE

27 May 2026