

Cardamine bilobata

COMMON NAMES

native bittercress

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing herb with single rosettes or in small clumps. **Leaves** deeply three lobed, sometimes with additional pair of leaflets; dull green to purplish, thin, fleshy, hairless. **Flower stems** sparsely branched, hairless, up to 30 cm tall. **Flowers** large, white, about 8 mm across, 4-petaled with 6 stamens. **Seeds** up to 1mm long, pale brown, oblong, in slender linear pods up to 2.5 cm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Cardamine corymbosa Hook.f., and *C. aff. bilobata*. From *C. corymbosa* it differs by its larger fruits, and three lobed leaves. *C. aff. bilobata* differs by its entire, unlobed leaves.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (North-west Nelson and east of the main divide).

HABITAT

Mainly low alpine 900–1500m elevation. Usually in fellfield, on moraine or scree edges, or rock crevices, also damp places in tussock grassland.

THREATS

Based on herbarium evidence it would seem that the species was more widespread and common than it is now. Being a cress, it is highly palatable, and it may have declined as a result of browsing pressure. The species is also considered to be quite elusive (P.B. Heenan pers. comm.) and is rarely seen even in apparently suitable habitat.

GENUS

Cardamine

FAMILY

Brassicaceae

AUTHORITY

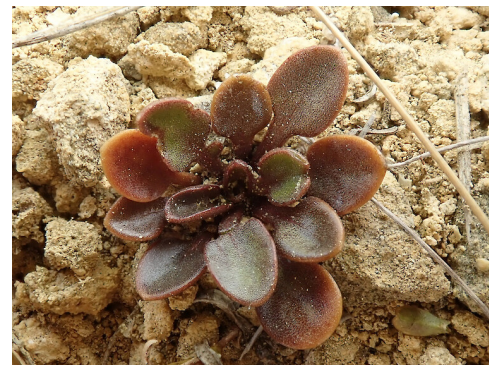
Cardamine bilobata Kirk

SYNONYMS

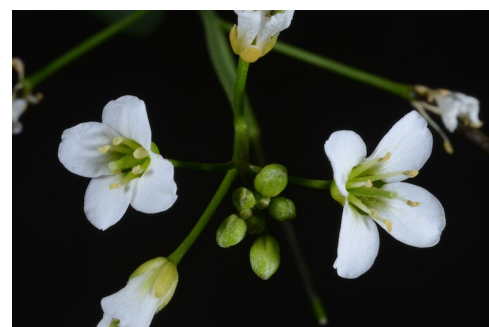
None

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes



On limestone. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 25/01/2022, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Photographer: Peter B. Heenan, Date taken: 26/08/2014, Licence: CC BY.

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

January–February

FRUITING

January–February

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seeds are dispersed by ballistic projection, water and attachment (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed.

ETYMOLOGY

cardamine: From the Greek name kárdamon, referring to an Indian spice

NVS CODE

CARBIL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 48

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, DP

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Data Deficient

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cardamine-bilobata/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026