

Epilobium confertifolium

COMMON NAMES

willowherb

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, Violet/Purple

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Compact, creeping, matted, mostly glabrous perennial herb. **Stems** 20–180 mm long, creeping and rooting at nodes or semi-erect to erect, glabrous except for lines of fine appressed or erect hairs decurrent from the petiole margins. **Leaves** arranged parallel to ground in creeping forms, longer than internodes, mostly opposite becoming alternate in the inflorescence; subsessile to shortly petiolate (up to 2 mm long); lamina 4–16 × 2–7 mm, glossy, bright green, elliptic, apex acute, base attenuate, margins serrulate bearing up to 12 teeth, lateral veins scarcely evident, 1–4 either side of midrib. **Inflorescence and flowers** erect with flowers well spaced along stems. **Ovaries** 5–12 mm long, glabrous, subsessile or on glabrous or finely strigulose-striated pedicels up to 8 mm long. **Floral tube** 0.4–1.0 × 0.7–1.4 mm, glabrous. **Sepals** 1.8–3.3 × 0.7–1.1 mm, glabrous, not keeled. **Petals** 2.0–5.5 × 1.2–2.6 mm, bright rose-purple, notch 0.3–1.3 mm. **Anthers** 0.3–0.5 × 0.3–0.4 mm, yellow; filaments of longer stamens 0.8–1.5 mm long, those of shorter 0.5–0.6 mm, rose-purple. **Style** 0.8–1.8 mm tall, white; stigma 0.6–1.3 × 0.3–0.8 mm, white, clavate. **Capsule** 13–40 mm long on pedicel up to 60 mm long; thick and fleshy, bright green, glabrous. **Seeds** 0.8–0.9 × 0.4 mm, brown, narrowly obovoid, papillose; coma 5–7 mm long, white, easily detached.

SIMILAR TAXA

A distinctive species easily recognised by the glabrous ovary and rose-pink flowers. It has no close relationship morphologically or otherwise to the other *Epilobium* species recorded from the Subantarctic islands

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku.

HABITAT

Sea level to 600 m a.s.l. A species of open ground amongst *Poa litorosa* and *Chionochloa antarctica* tussocks or in exposed rock ground and turf.

THREATS

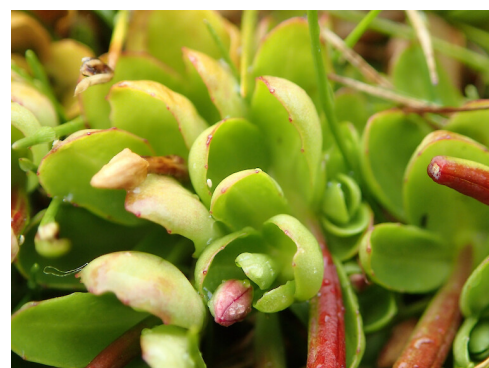
Not threatened. A narrow range endemic abundant within its subantarctic habitats and listed only because it qualifies as a Range Restricted species.

GENUS

Epilobium



Enderby Island. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 25/12/2015, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.



Enderby Island. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 25/12/2015, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.

FAMILY

Onagraceae

AUTHORITY

Epilobium confertifolium Hook.f.

SYNONYMS

Epilobium findlayi Allan, *Epilobium dawbinii* Allan

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November–January

FRUITING

December–March

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Minute pappate seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

epilobium: From the Greek epi- 'upon' and lobos 'a pod', the flowers appearing to be growing on the seed pod.

NVS CODE

EPICON

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 36$

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Raven PH, Raven TE. 1976. The genus *Epilobium* in Australasia. *New Zealand DSIR Bulletin 216*. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 321 p.

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.

Webb CJ, Simpson MJA. 2001. Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons. Manuka Press, Christchurch. 428 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 6 January 2008. Description adapted from Raven & Raven (1976) and Webb & Simpson (2001).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/epilobium-confertifolium/>

