

Epilobium margaretiae

COMMON NAMES

willowherb

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Creeping, glabrous perennial herb. Stems reddish 20-150 mm long, branching and rooting at nodes; dry leaves long persistent. Leaves crowded on stems, opposite, succulent, secund, glossy; lateral veins 1-3 each side of midrib, not evident when fresh; petiole 0-2(-10) mm long; lamina 3-16 x 2-5 mm, dark green to red-green, oblanceolate, apex acute or obtuse, base attenuate, margins distantly serrulate, bearing 4-10 teeth. Flowers borne in leaf axils, 2-4 per season, erect. Ovary 5-8 mm long, fleshy, reddish, glossy; pedicels 10 mm long at flowering often elongating slightly in fruit. Floral tube 3.0-5.0 x 1.3-3.0 mm, glabrous, holding much nectar. Sepals 3.5-6.2 x 1.4-1.5 mm, glabrous, weakly keeled. Petals white, 7.0-9.0 x 3.5-4.6 mm, apices notched, notch 1.4-2.7 mm deep. Anthers 1.0-1.2, yellow; filaments of longer stamens 2.7-7.4 mm long, those of shorter 1.3-4.0 mm long. Style 5.5-8.0 mm, white; stigma 0.6-1.5 x 0.3-0.9 mm, white, narrowly clavate. Capsules weakly falcate, 10-20 mm long, rather stout and glabrous. Seeds 1.5 x 0.6 mm, brown, smooth, coma 4-6 mm long, white, detaching readily.

SIMILAR TAXA

A distinctive species easily separated from other New Zealand epilobia by consistently opposite leaves and the very long floral tube (3-5 mm deep).

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, Nelson where it known from Kahurangi National Park (mt Arthur, Mt Peel, The Iron Hills) and in the east from the Travers and Byrant Ranges and the Mole Tops

HABITAT

High alpine (1300-1700 m a.s.l.) confined to steep ridge lines and crests where it grows in open, metamorphic rock rubble and fell field.

THREATS

Not threatened. Listed because it is a narrow range endemic of limited geographic extent. It is regarded as common in the few places from which it has been recorded.

GENUS

Epilobium

FAMILY

Onagraceae



Mt Robert, Nelson Lakes National Park.
Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken:
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Mt Robert, Nelson Lakes National Park.
Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken:
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AUTHORITY

Epilobium margaretiae Brockie

SYNONYMS

None

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

December - January

FRUITING

January - 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.

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, P.H.; Raven, T.E. 1976: The genus *Epilobium* in Australasia. New Zealand DSIR Bulletin 216. Wellington, Government Printer.

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 11: 285-309

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2011: Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons. Christchurch, Manuka Press.

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-margaretiae/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026