

Gaultheria nubicola

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Creeping woody herb to 1 m wide bearing closely-spaced small oval thick leaves with single bell-shaped small white flowers scattered among plant. Twigs not visible. Leaves with 3-5 small dark-tipped notches along margin. Fruit small, 3-4 mm wide, white or red.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DISTRIBUTION

Inhabits mountains of the South Island.

GENUS

Gaultheria

FAMILY

Ericaceae

AUTHORITY

Gaultheria nubicola D.J.Middleton

SYNONYMS

Pernettya alpina Franklin

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Fleshy berries are dispersed by invertebrate frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

gaultheria: Named after Jean François Gaultier of Quebec (6 Oct 1708-10 July 1756) by the Scandinavian Pehr Kalm in 1748.

nubicola: Cloud dweller

NVS CODE

GAUNUB



Old Man range, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Old Man Range, January. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

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 At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: NS, NStr, RR 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* 11: 285–309.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/gaultheria-nubicola/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026