

Gentianella amabilis

COMMON NAME

gentian

SYNONYMS

Gentiana amabilis Petrie

FAMILY

Gentianaceae

AUTHORITY

Gentianella amabilis (Petrie) Glenny

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

GNTAMA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 36$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand. South Island (Otago, Southland).

HABITAT

Subalpine - Alpine cushion bogs and low-angled flushes.



FEATURES

Plants polycarpic, height in flower 30–130 mm. Caudex unbranched, c.80 mm long. Root unbranched, 1.5–6.0 mm diameter at stem base. Flowering stems lateral only, 1–5 per plant, 1.1–2.0 mm diam. at base, stems tinted purple-black; lateral flowering stems erect or decumbent; flowering stem leaves 1–4 pairs per stem, lowest pedicels from near apex of flowering stem. Rosette of leaves distinct from flowering stem leaves; leaves narrowly elliptic or elliptic, 10–52 × 3.5–12.0 mm, tinted crimson below or tinted purple-black and speckled purple, channelled (petiole channelled also), not recurved, petiole indistinct to distinct, 9.5–12.5 × 1.0–4.1 mm wide; apex acute or rounded. Flowering stems 1–3 stems per plant. Flowering leaves as for rosette leaves but the upper ones sessile. Pedicels one per leaf axil, 3–37 mm long, 1.2–1.5 mm diameter. Flowers 1–5(–8) per plant, 15–23 mm long. Calyx 7.5–14.2 mm long, green tinted purple-black, hairs at calyx–corolla fusion line absent or present; lobes 4.5–9.5 × 3.1–4.7 mm at base, plane, apices acute, margins smooth or minutely denticulate, sinus hairs sparse. Corolla 11.8–22.5 mm long, white; tube 3.5–6.0 mm long; lobes 9.7–16 mm long, 5.8–10.6 mm wide, hairs below sinus absent or present; nectary 0.8–1.2–1.8 mm from corolla base. Filaments 7.5–13 mm long from corolla base, 0.9–2.0(–2.6) mm wide. Anthers 1.7–3.0 mm long, anther wall blue-black, mouth yellow, extrorse at anthesis; pollen yellow. Stigma colourless. Ovules 28–56 per ovary. Capsule 20–27 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Close to *Gentianella bellidiflora* from which it differs in being shorter, 30–130 mm tall (70–280 mm tall in Otago *G. bellidifolia*); having purple-spotted leaves with a dark purple petiole (green and unspotted in *G. bellidifolia*), and fewer flowers, 1–8 per plant (Otago *G. bellidifolia* has 4–26 flowers per plant); fewer flowering stems, 1–3 per plant (Otago *G. bellidifolia* has 1–4 stems per plant). The calyx lobes are wider, 3.1–4.7 mm wide (cf. 1.7–4.4 mm in *G. bellidifolia*), and the filaments are wider on average 1.7 mm rather than 1.2 mm.

FLOWERING

January – February

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

March - May

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

gentianella: Little Gentiana (named after Gentius, 6th century king of Illyria, who found the roots of the yellow gentian to have a healing effect on his malaria-stricken troops)

amabilis: From the Latin amare, 'to love', amabilis can be translated as 'worthy of love' or 'pleasing', botany was also called scientia amabilis 'the pleasing science'

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet for NZPCN prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2004). Description modified from Glenny (2004)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Glenny, D. 2004: A revision of the genus *Gentianella* in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 361–530.
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/gentianella-amabilis/>