

# Gentianella amabilis

## COMMON NAMES

gentian

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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.

## DISTRIBUTION

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

## HABITAT

Subalpine - Alpine cushion bogs and low-angled flushes.

## GENUS

Gentianella



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## FAMILY

Gentianaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Gentianella amabilis* (Petrie) Glenny

## SYNONYMS

*Gentiana amabilis* Petrie

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

January – February

## FRUITING

March - May

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

## 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'

## NVS CODE

GNTAMA

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

## 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: DPS, DPT, 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

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

## ATTRIBUTION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/gentianella-amabilis/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026