

Gentianella antipoda

COMMON NAMES

Antipodes Islands gentian

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Plants biennial, monocarpic, height in flower 35–240 mm. Caudex unbranched or branched (depending on the size of plant), up to 100 mm long. Flowering stems terminal and lateral, 2–20 per plant, 1.5–2.5 mm diameter when dry, yellow or tinted crimson, lateral flowering stems decumbent, flowering stem leaves 5–6 pairs per stem, lowest pedicels from halfway up flowering stem. Rosette of leaves present but not very distinct from flowering stem leaves, leaves narrowly elliptic, 34–39 × 4.8–6.2 mm wide, tinted crimson below or yellow, flat, not recurved, apex acute or rounded; margin thickened; petiole distinct, 3.2–3.5 mm wide. Flowering stem leaves similar to rosette leaves but smaller. Pedicels 1 per leaf axil, 0.8–2.0 × 0.6–0.9 mm. Flowers 73–83 per plant, 5.5–10.5 mm long. Calyx 4.7–8.0 mm long, hairs at calyx–corolla fusion line present; lobes 3.9–6.7 mm long, 0.9–1.3 mm wide at base, green or crimson, plane, apices narrowly acute, margins minutely denticulate, sinus hairs sparse. Corolla 5.5–10.5 mm long, white to purple, with veins uncoloured to purple; tube 1.6–2.9 mm long; lobes 3.9–7.6 mm long, 1.3–2.7 mm wide; hairs below sinus absent; nectary 1.0–1.4 mm from corolla base. Filaments 2.8–6.3 mm long from corolla base, 0.3–0.55 mm wide. Anthers 0.75–1.0 mm long, anther wall blue-black, mouth yellow, extrorse at anthesis. Stigma colour unknown. Ovules 3–9 per ovary. Capsule 2.9–7.2 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Gentianella antipoda is the only species present on the Antipodes Islands. Closest to *G. antarctica* from which it is distinguished by Plants having 2–20 lateral flowering stems; rosette leaf petioles 3.2–3.5 mm long (cf. 1.6–2.6 mm long); corolla tubes 1.6–2.9 mm long (3.6–2.4 mm long); nectaries 1.0–1.4 mm cf. 1.6–3.4 mm from corolla base; fewer ovules 3–9 per ovary (cf. 7–27); capsules 2.9–7.2 cf. 8.0–13.2 mm long

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: Antipodes Islands (Antipodes and Bollons Islands)

HABITAT

Coastal to montane in *Poa litorosa* tussock grassland and *Carex ternaria*–*Anisotome antipoda* bogs



Gentianella antipoda, Central Plains, Antipodes. Image taken by Dave Boyle. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Date taken: 04/01/2010, Licence: CC BY.



Gentianella antipoda, Northern Plains, Antipodes. Image taken by Dave Boyle. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Date taken: 09/01/2010, Licence: CC BY.

THREATS

A Naturally Uncommon, range-restricted, island endemic. Abundant on the islands it is under no obvious threat. The Antipodes Islands are administered as a Nature Reserve and are part of a World Heritage Park with access strictly controlled by the New Zealand Department of Conservation.

GENUS

Gentianella

FAMILY

Gentianaceae

AUTHORITY

Gentianella antipoda (Kirk) T.N.Ho et S.W.Liu

SYNONYMS

Gentiana antipoda Kirk, Gentiana antipoda f. pallida Kirk, Gentiana antipoda f. rubra Kirk, Chionogentias antipoda (Kirk) L.G.Adams

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

December – April

FRUITING

January - 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.

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

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)

antipoda: Named after the Antipodes i.e. Australia or New Zealand which are on the opposite side of the world from Europe

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE, OL, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL IE

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

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 prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (October 2004). Description modified from Glenny (2004)

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

27 May 2026