

Gentianella astonii subsp. arduana

COMMON NAMES

Ward Beach gentian, Chalk Range gentian

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tufted perennial up to 110 mm tall when flowering. Flowering stems, 3-26 per plant, green or purple-black. Rosette leaves absent. Leaves narrowly to very narrowly elliptic to obovate, 8.6-25 x 1.1-3.9 mm, purple at base, otherwise dark green, flat or slightly V-shaped, margins minutely toothed or smooth; apex rounded to acute. Pedicels (0-)3-18 mm long. Flowers 6-52 per plant, 10-20 mm long. Calyx 5.2-7.1 mm; lobes, green, 3.5-5.4 x 1.1-1.7 mm, plane or recurved, margins minutely toothed. Corolla 9.2-15.2 mm, white, with violet tinting on the outside and inside of the corolla lobe apices, tube 3.0-5.2 mm; lobes 6.2-10 x 3.9-6.7 mm, apices toothed. Nectaries 1.2-4.3 mm from corolla base, V-shaped with a pocket or flaps that are not fused at base, margins toothed to entire. Filaments 4-8.6 mm from corolla base. Anthers 1.1-2.0 mm, anther wall blue-black. Ovules 13-28 per ovary. Capsule 7.6-15 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *G. astonii* (Petrie) T.N.Ho et S.W.Liu subsp. *astonii* by the smaller leaves (8.6-25 cf. 16-32 mm in subsp. *astonii*), smaller anthers (1.1-2 cf. 1.7-2.5 mm in subsp. *astonii*), and 13-28 ovules per ovary cf. 27-30 ovules per ovary in subsp. *astonii*. From *G. calcis* Glenny et Molloy, *G. astonii* differs by the shorter leaves (9-32 cf. 30-83 in *G. calcis*), which are plane and without a recurved apex.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island. Marlborough, near Ward, Chalk Range, Mean Hill and In Canterbury at Whalesback Ridge

HABITAT

Coastal to montane on limestone rocks. Often on steep bluffs, cliffs and cliff faces, ledges, crevices and rock joints. Also on limestone talus, colluvium and associated rendzina soils

THREATS

Most at risk in the lowland part of its range, where it is threatened by weeds and the potential for further limestone quarrying. Otherwise secure in the inland and more montane part of its range. Previously regarded (as *Gentiana* aff. *astonii* (d) (CHR 529114; Ward) and *Gentiana* aff. *astonii* (f) (CHR 279272; Chalk Range)) as Range Restricted in de Lange et al. (2004).

GENUS

Gentianella

FAMILY

Gentianaceae

AUTHORITY

Gentianella astonii subsp. *arduana* Glenny et Molloy



SYNONYMS

None

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

March-June (-October)

FRUITING

April-November

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)

astonii: After Aston

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, 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

de Lange et al., 2004, Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand, New Zealand Journal of Botany 42: 45-76.

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

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-astonii-subsp-arduana/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026