

# Geranium sessiliflorum var. arenarium

## COMMON NAME

short-flowered cranesbill

## SYNONYMS

*Geranium sessiliflorum* subsp. *novae-zelandiae* var. *arenarium* (G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson) Carolin

## FAMILY

Geraniaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Geranium sessiliflorum* var. *arenarium* G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

GERSVA

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 52

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, RR

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, RR

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, South of Otago Peninsula throughout the Foveaux Strait area and in northern Stewart Island

## HABITAT

Coastal. Mainly found in sand country - usually in dune swales or on shallowly sloping beaches. Sometimes on or near rock outcrops or within peaty soils near seepages or within coastal turfs.

## FEATURES

All parts softly and finely pilose. Leaves orbicular, closely lobed, divided at base, unusually appressed to the ground, petioles and peduncles tinged with purple, blade pale glaucous grey. Flowers white

## SIMILAR TAXA

Most similar to *G. brevicaule* Hook.f. from which it differs mainly by the softly silvery-pilose, glaucescent to silvery leaves which are slightly larger in size. The flowers appear to be smaller. A poorly known taxon whose exact status requires further clarification. It does, however, appear to be distinct from the other variants now included in *G. brevicaule*.



*Geranium sessiliflorum* var. *arenarium*.  
Photographer: John Barkla



*Geranium sessiliflorum* var. *arenarium*.  
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## FLOWERING

October - March

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

December - June

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from seed. An excellent pot plant. Does well in full sun in a free draining substrate.

## THREATS

Not Threatened. However, may yet qualify for a listing of Naturally Uncommon as it is never that common at any particular location and yet occupies a large range. Possibly at risk in its preferred sand dune habitats from the spread of marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*).

## ETYMOLOGY

**geranium:** From the Greek *geranos* 'crane', the fruit of the plant resembling the head and beak of this bird, hence the common name cranesbill.

**sessiliflorum:** With unstalked flowers

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

Allan (1961) treats *G. brevicaule* Hook.f. as a synonym of *G. sessiliflorum* var. *arenarium*, incorrectly stating that the type locality of *G. brevicaule* is Chalky Inlet, Fiordland, New Zealand when it is Tasmania (Aedo et al. 2005). Fiordland plants appear to match *G. sessiliflorum* var. *arenarium*, and together with plants from Stewart Island, the Foveaux Strait and coastal portion of Otago these plants do not fit closely any of the other plants within New Zealand or Australia now attributed to *G. brevicaule* (cf. Aedo et al. 2005). Therefore pending further study NZPCN prefer to regard this variety as distinct from *G. brevicaule* (see also Mitchell et al. 2009), and as it has no published rank yet within that species, we use the only published name available for it *G. sessiliflorum* var. *arenarium*.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange 28 July 2007.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Aedo, C.; Navarro, C.; Alarcon, M.L. 2005: Taxonomic revision of *Geranium* sections *Andina* and *Chilensia* (Geraniaceae). *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society* 149(1): 1-68

Allan, H.H. 1961: *Flora of New Zealand*. Vol. I. Wellington, Government Printer.

Mitchell, A. D., P. B. Heenan, and A. M. Paterson. 2009. Phylogenetic relationships of *Geranium* species indigenous to New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 21-31.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/geranium-sessiliflorum-var-arenarium/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/geranium-sessiliflorum-var-arenarium/>