

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

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: CD, DP, RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

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/Rakiura.

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.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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.



Geranium sessiliflorum var. *arenarium*.
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Geranium sessiliflorum var. *arenarium*.
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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*.

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

Never that common at any particular location and yet occupies a large range. At risk in its preferred sand dune habitats from the spread of marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*) and other weeds.

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, Alarcón ML. 2005: Taxonomic revision of *Geranium* sections *Andina* and *Chilensia* (Geraniaceae). *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society* 149: 1–68. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1095-8339.2005.00432.x>
Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsida, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.
Mitchell AD, Heenan PB, Paterson AM. 2009. Phylogenetic relationships of *Geranium* species indigenous to New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 21–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00288250909509789>

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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