

Geum cockaynei

COMMON NAMES

Cockayne's geum

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

Cream, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect bronze-green, red-green or green herb up to 400 mm tall at flowering, arising from a stout, woody stock. Stock apex covered in long persistent, fibrous leaf remnants. Basal leaves up to 150 mm long, distinctly white-pilose, imparipinnate; lateral leaflets in up to 15 pairs, the lower minute but upper sometimes up to 15 mm long; terminal leaflet 10–70 mm long, crenate-dentate, serrate-crenate or occasionally obscurely lobed; cauline leaves few, often paired, oblong, toothed, sometimes very reduced, bracteate. Peduncle up to 400 mm tall, often arching in upper third. Inflorescence (1-)25(-30)-flowered. Flowers up to 10 mm diameter; calyx pubescent to pilose, lobes often deeply cut, 4–5 mm long, ovate, bracteoles minute, entire or bifurcate. Petals creamy white, 4–8-(10) mm long, ovate or obovate, claw margin often ciliate. Receptacle villous. Achenes numerous, flattened, stipitate, 1.5–1.8 mm long, densely pilose especially on margins, styles c.2.5 mm long, villous near achene, apex recurved.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from all but *G. albiflorum* by the many-flowered inflorescences (up to 30 flowers per inflorescence), and by the petals which are 4–15 mm long. *Geum albiflorum* is an allopatric sister species confined to the Auckland Islands, and differs from *G. cockaynei* by the smaller leaves, 3–5 flowered inflorescences, and by the styles which are shorter than the achenes.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North and South Islands from the Raukumara Ranges south.

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine grassland and herbfield. Damp tussock grassland and herbfield, rocky sites, stream banks

GENUS

Geum

FAMILY

Rosaceae

AUTHORITY

Geum cockaynei (Bolle) Molloy et C.J.Webb



Borland Burn, Fiordland National Park.
Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken:
31/12/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mount Ruapehu. Photographer: Jeremy R.
Rolfe, Date taken: 09/02/2012, Licence: CC BY.

SYNONYMS

Oncostylus cockaynei F.Bolle; New Zealand plants have been incorrectly referred to the South American *Geum parviflorum* Smith

TAXONOMIC NOTES

A species complex comprising of at least a further two as yet unnamed species.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

December – March

FRUITING

December – April

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Pappate achenes are dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in pots in an alpine house, and in cooler climates within a rock garden. Best grown from fresh seed.

ETYMOLOGY

geum: Possibly from the Greek *geuo* 'to give a pleasant flavour', the roots of some species being aromatic.

cockaynei: Named after Leonard Cockayne FRS (7 April 1855 - 8 July 1934) who is regarded as New Zealand's greatest botanist and a founder of modern science in New Zealand

NVS CODE

GEUCOC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 70

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 Not Threatened [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

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

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

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. 1988: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV. Naturalised Pteridophytes, Gymnosperms, Dicotyledons. 4. Christchurch, New Zealand, Botany Division, D.S.I.R.

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on herbarium specimens and both Allan (1961) and Webb et al. (1988)

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/geum-cockaynei/>

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