

Geum uniflorum

COMMON NAME

alpine avens

SYNONYMS

Oncostylus uniflorus (Buchanan) F.Bolle

FAMILY

Rosaceae

AUTHORITY

Geum uniflorum Buchanan

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

GEUUNI

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand. South and Stewart Islands

HABITAT

Subalpine to alpine (up to 1800 m a.s.l.). In herbfield, on rock ledges, and in moist tussock grassland

FEATURES

Low-growing, loosely mat-forming, strongly rhizomatous herb up to 200 mm tall at flowering, arising from a ± stout, initially fleshy, ultimately woody stock. Basal leaves up to 120 mm long, imparipinnate, glossy dark green fading to dark red, areolate, glabrate to moderately pilose, margins lobulate-crenate, undulose, fringed with a dense covering of harsh golden yellow hairs, hydathodes white, conspicuous; lateral leaflets in 1-2(-5) pairs, all very reduced and lowest rudimentary; terminal leaflet 10-40 mm long, crenate-dentate and sometimes obscurely lobed; cauline leaves reduced to small, toothed bracts. Scape up to 200 mm long, finely pubescent, intermixed with longer, wispy, multicellular glandular hairs. Flowers solitary, up to 25 mm diameter. Calyx pubescent and villous, lobes c.6 mm long, narrow-ovate, bracteoles minute, deeply bifid. Petals 7-17 mm long, white or creamy white, broadly ovate. Disc crimson. Anthers purple. Achenes numerous, c. 2 mm. long, densely pilose especially on margins; style remnant c.5 mm long, apex hooked.



Upper Otira valley, December. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Hohonu. Photographer: Gillian Crowcroft

SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *Geum divergens* Cheeseman with which it shares a strongly rhizomatous growth habit and large flowers. From that species it is distinguished by its smaller overall dimensions, open, leafy rosettes; leaves which are adaxially areolate, glossy dark green fading to dark red with age; with more or less undulate, lobulate-crenate leaf margins which are fringed with dense golden hairs and conspicuous white hydathodes; pubescent petioles and peduncles with intermixed longer multicellular glandular hairs; and solitary white flowers up to 25 mm diameter, with a central crimson eye, ringed with purple anthers.

FLOWERING

November - February

FLOWER COLOURS

Cream, White

FRUITING

December - March

LIFE CYCLE

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.

uniflorum: One flowered

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Allan (1961) and Webb et al. (1988)

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.

MORE INFORMATION

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