

# Gunnera arenaria

## COMMON NAMES

sand gunnera

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: CD, DPT, RR

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low growing herb, mat forming. **Stolons** rather stout, usually creeping through sand, branched, up to approximately 40 cm. long. **Leaves** on stout, more or less flat, amplexicaul petioles up to 5 cm. long; lamina rather diversely shaped (on same plant) oblong to ovate to sub-rhombic, cuneate to subcordate at base, subcoriaceous, grey-green, 7–12–(20) × 9–15 mm., subglabrous, coarsely crenate, sometimes lobed.

**Inflorescence** up to 7 cm. long, flowers sessile. **Staminate flower** with filiform calyx-lobes, minute bracts; petals 2, about lanceolate, glabrous, more or less 2 mm. long; filaments obsolete. **Pistillate flowers** with triangular calyx-lobes more or less 6 mm. long; styles filiform, up to 5 mm. long. **Drupes** clavate to obconic, patent to pendulous, more or less apiculate, on elongated scapes, yellow to pale red, more or less 4–6 mm long.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, South Island and Stewart Island/Rakiura from the Pouto Peninsula south and mainly westerly in its distribution. Occurring locally throughout.

## HABITAT

A coastal species of damp sand ground, dune slacks and swales, and along tidal river margins. It also grows on coastal sandstone bluffs in some parts of the country.

## THREATS

At risk from coastal development, wetland drainage and the spread of invasive weeds. Some populations have been destroyed by coastal erosion.

## GENUS

Gunnera

## FAMILY

Gunneraceae

## AUTHORITY

Gunnera arenaria Cheeseman

## SYNONYMS

None

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes



Mason Bay, Rakiura. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 19/04/2021, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mason Bay, Rakiura. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 19/04/2021, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

November–March

## FRUITING

November–May

## ETYMOLOGY

**gunnera**: Named after Bishop Gunner, a Swedish botanist

**arenaria**: Sand dweller

## NVS CODE

GUNARE

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 34

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Gradual Decline

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsida, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Allan (1961).

Some of this factsheet information is derived from [Flora of New Zealand Online](#) and is used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand licence](#).

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/gunnera-arenaria/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026