

# Jovellana repens

## 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

Violet/Purple, White

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Herbaceous, ± glandular-pubescent, widely creeping, much-branched perennial forming leafy patches 1-2 metres in diameter. Stems 20-30 mm long, slender, usually dark red to pink sometimes green, prostrate, rooting freely at nodes; branches prostrate, apices weakly ascendant, ± filiform, clad in patent hairs. Leaves opposite, membranous (somewhat brittle), finely pubescent; petiole fleshy, 5-12 × 2.0-2.3 mm, clad in fine patent hairs; lamina 10-40 mm long, dark green to reddish green above, pale green or red beneath, ovate, orbicular, suborbicular to broad-oblong, apex ± rounded, obtuse to subacute, bases abruptly truncate to weakly cordate, margins coarsely and irregularly doubly crenate-dentate. Inflorescences sparse to numerous, terminal, axillary (or both), somewhat obscured by foliage, paniculate (often occurring in groupings of 2-3 near branch apices) comprising 1-5-flowered (us. 2-3 together); pedicels subfiliform, nude or bracted. Flowers 6 mm. diameter; calyx-lobes 1-2 mm long, ovate, acute or subacute. Corolla c. 5-6 mm. diameter, cut to nearly halfway into 2 ± equal deeply concave lips, white, purple-spotted. Capsule ovoid to obovoid, 6-7 mm long. Seed 0.35-0.50 mm, dark red-brown, usually asymmetrically elliptic or broadly elliptic, occasionally oblong.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Readily distinguished from the much less common *Jovellana sinclairii* by its creeping rather shrub forming growth habit, smaller leaves, and smaller, fewer-flowered inflorescences. Sterile plants have been confused with vegetative plants of *Brachyglottis sciadophila* – which differs by its lianoid growth habit with long trailing, sparsely branched, flexuous woody stems, widely spaced orbicular to broad ovate-orbicular, coarsely and acutely serrated somewhat scaberulous leaves. Nevertheless when growing on the forest floor this species has a remarkable resemblance to *Jovellana*, though even then it rarely roots at the nodes, and though forming tangled masses is always sparsely branched. The yellow daisy flowers of *Brachyglottis sciadophila* clearly distinguish it from the white-flowered *Jovellana repens*. *Jovellana repens* can also be confused with *Parahebe jovellanoides*. However this *Parahebe* has orbicular, deltoid to spatulate leaves. Flowering specimens are easily distinguished by their unbranched, 1-7-flowered racemose inflorescences, and non-pouched flowers with magenta corolla ring and stripes.



Mangatainoka River, Tararua Range.  
Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken:  
02/01/2008, Licence: CC BY.



Dawson Falls, Taranaki Maunga. Photographer:  
Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 13/02/2015,  
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## DISTRIBUTION

North and South Islands from Mt Pirongia (in the west) and Te Moehau (in the East) south. Mostly montane and sparse in the northern part of range but becoming more common and ranging from lowland to upper montane from about the main North Island axial ranges south.

## HABITAT

In shaded sites along streamsides – on banks and amongst boulders where silt, sand and humus has accumulated, also in seepages on banks, cliffs and within forest.

## GENUS

Jovellana

## FAMILY

Calceolariaceae

## AUTHORITY

Jovellana repens (Hook.f.) Kraenzel.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seeds are dispersed by wind and possibly water (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

This plant has been featured as a Plant of the Month – see [Trilepidea: NZPCN newsletter for March 2020](#) for the full story.

## ETYMOLOGY

**jovellana:** A man's name

**repens:** From Latin repere meaning to creep, means creeping

## NVS CODE

JOVREP

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

### **NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION**

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### **MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/jovellana-repens/>

### **PDF DATE**

25 May 2026