

Mazus arenarius

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Mazaceae

AUTHORITY

Mazus arenarius Heenan, P.N.Johnson et C.Webb

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

MAZARE

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 104

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Gradual Decline

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to coastal Otago, Southland and Stewart Island/Rakiura.

HABITAT

In dune fields where it grows in seasonally damp swales (depressions), or on rocky coastal lines within coastal turf developed around seepages. Occasionally found along the margins of slow flowing tidal streams.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Mat-forming, creeping, rhizomatous herb forming dense green-brown or purple brown patches. **Leaves** 10–30–(120) mm, opposite, spatulate, obovate to broad-elliptic purple-brown when exposed, green-brown in shade, upper surface finely hairy. **Inflorescences** terminal, 2–3–(4) flowered. **Corolla** 6.5–9 mm long, white, flushed purple in throat, palate yellow; lower lobes 3, these rounded, sometimes square or rectangular, or slightly narrowed toward proximal end, apex often retuse; upper lobes 2, narrow-triangular, apex subacute, sometimes retuse. **Fruit** (3.5)–4.5–7–(9) × (3.5)–4–5–(6) mm, red-purple. **Seed** 0.7–0.9 mm.



Cultivated plant from False Islet dunes, Catlins.
Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Mazus arenarius. Photographer: John Barkla,
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SIMILAR TAXA

Perhaps closest to *Mazus radicans* from which it differs by the smaller, unmottled leaves, smaller, white, scarcely flushed purple, flowers with the lower corolla lobes rounded, and usually with square or retuse apices, while the upper corolla lobes are subacute. As far as is known neither species occur sympatrically.

FLOWERING

November–December

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

FRUITING

December–July–(December)

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from the division of whole plants and seed but not especially attractive, hard to maintain and unless conditions are right slow growing.

THREATS

Threatened by the small, fragmented population sizes, the dynamic nature of the species habitat coupled with land development and competition from naturalised plants. Not a common species known only from 7 sites in the southern South Island and 7 on Stewart Island/Rakiura. Several of these populations are on private land and some populations are very small and are known to be experiencing a slow rate of decline.

ETYMOLOGY

mazus: Tear (after protuberance on throat of flower)

arenarius: Sand dweller

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 October 2003. Description adapted from Heenan et al. (1996).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan PB, Webb CJ, Johnson PN. 1996. *Mazus arenarius* (Scrophulariaceae), a new, small-flowered, and rare species segregated from *M. radicans*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 34(1): 33–40.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1996.10412689>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/mazus-arenarius/>