

Mazus pumilio

COMMON NAMES

mazus

BIOSTATUS

Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial creeping herb. Leaves up to 60 mm long, alternate, in terminal rosettes; hairy on the margin and adaxial midrib and lamina; glabrous on abaxial midrib and lamina; lamina 10-42 x 5-17 mm, elliptic, strongly undulate, midrib and lateral veins raised on abaxial surface; margin with a brown band, lower half distinctly serrate-dentate; base attenuate. Petiole 3-9 mm long, plano-convex, white, hairy. Inflorescence lateral, up to 60-flowered. Peduncle 30-70 mm long, glabrous. Bracteoles 1.5-6.0 x 0.2-0.9 mm, narrow-linear, ciliate, solitary, inserted below calyx. Calyx c.7.5 mm long, campanulate, green, with sparse hairs on margin and lobes; lobes 3.5-5.0 mm long, deltoid. Flower bud dark lilac. Corolla 16 x 17 mm, abaxial surface lilac, adaxial surfaces pale lilac; bearing sparse glandular hairs on abaxial surface. Tube 4-5 mm long. Lower lobes 6.0-7.0 x 6.5-7.0 mm, spreading, apex praemorse; palate with 2 longitudinal elevations, each with several yellow blotches, outer part glabrous or with a few sparse hairs, throat hairy. Upper lobes 6.5-7.0 mm long, narrowly deltoid, apex subacute. Stamens 4, glabrous; filaments 1.5-2.0 mm long, white. Ovary 2.0 x 1.4 mm, ovoid, glabrous. Style 4.5-5.0 mm long, white. Fruit 4.0 x 2.5 mm, enclosed within calyx. Seeds 0.6-0.8 x 0.4-0.5 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Most likely to be confused with *M. novaezeelandiae* W.R.Barker, itself a New Zealand endemic only recently (1991) recognised as distinct from what had been the Australian endemic *M. pumilio*. From *M. novaezeelandiae*, *M. pumilio* differs by its distinctly serrate-dentate, rather than entire to sinuate leaves, and lilac rather than white flowers. The capsules are also much smaller than *M. novaezeelandiae*. The leaves of *M. pumilio* are distinctly and uniformly hairy, while with the exception of *f. hirtus* Heenan those of *M. novaezeelandiae* are glabrous. In *f. hirtus* the hairs are confined to the midrib and lamina margin, whilst in *M. pumilio* they cover upper lamina surface, midrib and margins.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. In New Zealand known only from one site near Whanaki, Eastern Northland. Present in Australia



Mazus pumilio plant in cultivation.

Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.



In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/07/2007, Licence: CC BY.

HABITAT

The sole New Zealand wild occurrence was discovered near Whanaki by Mr Nigel Miller in 1996. At that site plants were found in a south-easterly facing, shaded gully growing on damp clay soils, within hummocks, under a small forest remnant dominated by kohekohe (*Dysoxylum spectabile*), pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*), puriri (*Vitex lucens*) and kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*).

THREATS

The fate of the small New Zealand population discovered in 1996 remains unknown. When it was discovered there were very few plants giving the appearance of a recently established population. This distinctive species is absent from earlier New Zealand gatherings of *Mazus*, and it does not appear to have been collected since 1996. Its claim to vagrant status relies on its apparent inability to establish beyond its sole New Zealand occurrence. In cultivation the species readily sets seed and spreads rapidly. Why it has remained scarce in the wild is an aspect that requires further critical study.

GENUS

Mazus

FAMILY

Mazaceae

AUTHORITY

Mazus pumilio R.Br.

SYNONYMS

None

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September - May

FRUITING

December - June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces and fresh seed. An attractive ground cover for a damp sunny or shaded spot. Does not like drought and cannot tolerate much competition from taller growing plants. Now widely grown and sold by New Zealand plant nurseries. Though the exact source of the plants is not clear and they are often sold incorrectly as *M. novaezeelandiae*.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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

ETYMOLOGY

mazus: Tear (after protuberance on throat of flower)

pumilio: Small, dwarf

NVS CODE

MAZPUM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 38$

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

2012 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

2009 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

2004 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan, P.B.; Forester, L.J. 1997: *Mazus pumilio* (Scrophulariaceae), an addition to the indigenous flora of New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 35: 437-440.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 18 August 2005. Description adapted from Heenan & Forster (1997).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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