

# Montigena novae-zelandiae

## COMMON NAMES

Scree pea

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: Sp, DPS, DPT, RF

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, Violet/Purple

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small woody sub-shrub arising from thin, branched stems that extend to the surface from a deeply buried root stock. Foliage a dull green, leafy tufts, 30-70mm long, 10-60mm wide. Leaves divided, 20-35mm long. Leaflets in 6-10 pairs per leaf, usually folded along the mid-rib; fleshy, grey-green or grey-blue and sometimes flushed red. Flowers in bunches, purplish, clover-pink or golden-brown, arising from axils of older leaves. Seed pods swollen, darkening to orange-red at maturity, grey brown when open. Seeds 10 per pod, 3.5mm long, 3mm wide, brown.

## SIMILAR TAXA

None. Large bloated sausage-shaped seed pods, fern-like leaf form.

## DISTRIBUTION

South Island, east of Southern Alps.

## HABITAT

Subalpine to low alpine, on fine-grained, partially stable and moist greywacke scree, rock debris and gravel slopes. Sometimes in depleted tussock grasslands.

## GENUS

Montigena

## FAMILY

Fabaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Montigena novae-zelandiae* (Hook.f.) Heenan

## SYNONYMS

*Swainsona novae-zelandiae* Hook.f. var. *novae-zelandiae*, *Swainsona novae-zelandiae* var. *glabra* G.Simpson

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes



Dry River, Tresslick Basin. Photographer: Gillian M. Crowcroft, Licence: All rights reserved.



Mature seed pods, Hawkdun Range. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

December - February

## FRUITING

January - April

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult and should not be removed from the wild.

## ETYMOLOGY

**montigena**: Mountain-born

**novae-zelandiae**: Of New Zealand

## NVS CODE

MONNOV

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 32

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: RF, Sp

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: RF, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: RF, Sp

2004 | Gradual Decline

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Endangered | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, NR, PF, RR, TL Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Wellington, Government Printer.

Heenan, P.B. 1998: *Montigena* (Fabaceae), a new genus endemic to New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 36(1): 41-51.

Hooker, J.D. 1864: *Handbook of the New Zealand Flora: a systematic description of the native plants of New Zealand and the Chatham, Kermadec's, Lord Auckland's, Campbell's and Macquarie's Islands*. Part I ed. London, Reeve. 392 pp.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (1 August 2003). Description based on Allan (1961) - as *Swainsona novae-zelandiae* (see Hooker 1864).

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/montigena-novae-zelandiae/>

## PDF DATE

27 May 2026