Myosotis antarctica subsp. antarctica

BIOSTATUS
Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp, TO
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS
Blue, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Perennial rosette-leaved herb. Rosette leaves 10-20 × 4-5 mm, lamina obovate, obtuse, petiole short, broad; hairs on upper surface crowded, long, soft and silky, those of under-surface sparse, glabrate. Lateral branches numerous, decumbent, up to 70 mm long, occasionally branched, internodes usually < leaves. Stem-leaves similar to rosette-leaves near base, becoming sessile above, bracts c.5 × 2 mm. Cymes usually simple, few-flowered, bracteate except at extreme tip, internodes, except the lowest, very short; pedicels c.1 mm long. Calyx c.3 mm long, lobes > 1/2 length, broad and subacute; hairs mostly very long and soft, a few short and closely appressed. Corolla blue (occasionally white), 2-3 mm diam, tube cylindric, 2 mm long, lobes 1.0-1·5 mm long, ± parallel-sided, narrowing above to obtuse tip; filaments very short, anthers < 1 mm, wholly included, tips not reaching scales; style < calyx, stigma clavate. Nutlet 1.1-1.4 × 0.7-1.0 mm, ovate, black.

SIMILAR TAXA
Myosotis antarctica is closely allied to the M. pygmaea complex (comprising M. brevis, M. drucei, M. glauca and M. pygmaea and several allied and apparently unnamed species). From these it is geographically distinguished by its allopatry - being confined to Campbell Island where members of the M. pygmaea complex are apparently not present (but see Allan 1961), and, morphologically by its usually blue flowers (though Allan 1961 notes they are typically white, Webb et al (1988) state they are typically blue) and by the hairs on the leaf undersides which are copious, crowded, very fine and silky. These characters place it closest to M. capitata (endemic to the Auckland and Campbell Island groups) from which M. antarctica differs by its mostly shorter rosette leaves (up to 20 mm long cf. > 30 mm long in M. capitata), and by the bracteate rather than ebracteate cymes. While M. antarctica is easily distinguished from M. capitata its exact relationship to members of M. pygmaea, and indeed the status of all named and unnamed members of that complex needs critical study. A part revision of the M. pygmaea complex is offered by de Lange et al. (2010) although an adequate summary of what is known of the group needs further investigation.

DISTRIBUTION
Indigenous: Campbell Island and South America

Col Ridge, Campbell Island. Photographer: Phil Garnock-Jones, Licence: CC BY-NC.

Col Ridge, Campbell Island. Photographer: Phil Garnock-Jones, Licence: CC BY-NC.

HABITAT
Widespread and at times locally common in herbfield, grassland, rocky places and crevices

THREATS
Myosotis antarctica is listed simply because it is a narrow range endemic confined to one small island group. As far as is known there are no threats acting on this species which occurs within a Nature Reserve and World Heritage site which has strict controls on the number of visitors each year.

GENUS
Myosotis

FAMILY
Boraginaceae

AUTHORITY
Myosotis antarctica Hook. f.

SYNONYMS
None

ENDEMIC TAXON
No

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
November - March

FRUITING
December - March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Unknown. Probably difficult.

WHERE TO BUY
Not commercially available

ETYMOLOGY
myosotis: Mouse-eared
antarctica: Antarctic

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp, TO
2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE, OL
2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon
2004 | Range Restricted
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Otago: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, NStr, Sp 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. Goverment Printer, Wellington.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 February 2008. Description based on Allan (1961).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): Myosotis antarctica subsp. antarctica Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/myosotis-antarctica-subsp-antarctica/ (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/myosotis-antarctica-subsp-antarctica/

PDF DATE

25 May 2026