

Myosotis cheesemanii

COMMON NAMES

forget-me-not

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: Sp, DPS, DPT, RR

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial herb forming diffuse to semi-compact cushions 20–50 × 15–30 mm. **Branches** rooting freely from old leaf bases. **Stems** leafy, erect, branching several times. **Leaves** 12 × 5 mm, elliptic, sub acute, petiole of similar length, broad; leaf hairs stiff, appressed, imbricating on upper surface, on undersurface sparse; hairs on petiole forming a long fringe. **Lateral branches** immersed in cushion, internodes < leaves. **Stem-leaves** 7 × 2 mm, linear-oblong, sessile, very hairy, hairs appressed on both surfaces. **Inflorescence** a simple 2–4-flowered cyme, with each flower subtended by a bract, internodes and pedicels short. **Calyx** 5 mm long when in flower, lobes < half length of calyx, narrowly acute; hairs uniform and closely appressed. **Corolla** white, 7–8 mm diam., tube cylindric, 6 mm, corolla lobes 3 × 3 mm, rounded; filaments short, anthers 1.5 mm, projecting above rather large scales. **Style** 2× calyx length. **Nutlets** ovate, 1.4–1.9 × 0.8–1.2 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Myosotis cheesemanii is very close to *M. colensoi* from which it differs by its low cushion-forming rather than open mat-forming habit, uniform rather than variable leaf hair length, short rather than long lateral branches which unlike *M. colensoi* do not extend beyond the rosettes. Both species are also ecologically distinct: *M. colensoi* is confined to limestone rock and associated soils, *M. cheesemanii* a high alpine of cushion field and snow banks.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (apparently confined to the Pisa and Dunstan Ranges, Central Otago).

HABITAT

Alpine. Mainly found in cushionfield. It has been recorded once from a snow bank.

THREATS

This species until recently remained little known to botanists. At least five populations are now known, and while most are small, at least one comprised 100 plants. Careful survey for this species is needed, as well as long-term monitoring of one or more populations to determine the species life cycle, and overall long-term stability.

GENUS

Myosotis

FAMILY

Boraginaceae



Myosotis cheesemanii, Dunstan Peak.
Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

AUTHORITY

Myosotis cheesemanii Petrie

SYNONYMS

None

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Unknown

FRUITING

Unknown

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Unknown

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ETYMOLOGY

myosotis: Mouse-eared

cheesemanii: Named after Thomas Frederick Cheeseman (1846 - 15 October 1923) who was a New Zealand botanist and naturalist who, in 1906, produced *The Manual of the New Zealand Flora*.

NVS CODE

MYOCHE

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DP, RR, Sp

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Critical

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Critical | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, NS, NStr, RR, St, 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 HH. 1961. *Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsidea, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones*. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.

ATTRIBUTION

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

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/myosotis-cheesemanii/>

PDF DATE

