

Myosotis laeta

COMMON NAME

Red Hills forget-me-not

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Boraginaceae

AUTHORITY

Myosotis laeta Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 46$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR, St

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DP, St

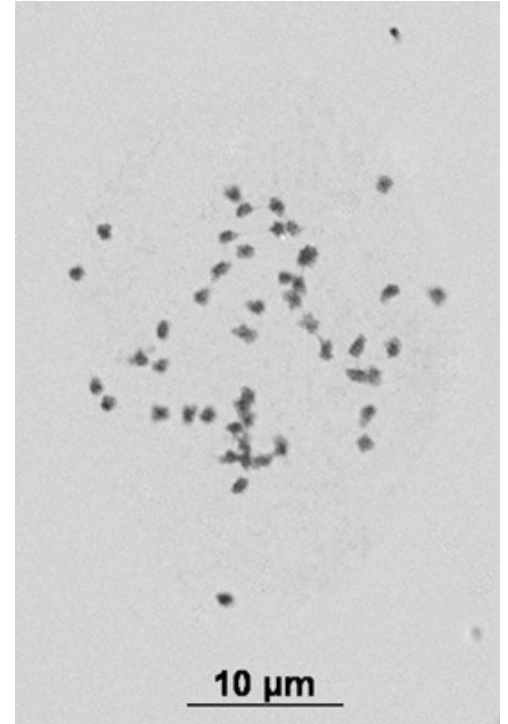
2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Red Hills)

HABITAT

An ultramafic endemic confined to montane habitats where it grows in rock strewn ground amongst *Chionochloa defracta* tussock grassland and until recently at another site within a sparse kahikatoa (*Leptospermum scoparium*) shrubland



In cult. ex Red Hills. $2n = 46$. May 2008.
Photographer: Brian Murray



Myosotis laeta foliage In cultivation ex Red Hills. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

FEATURES

Dark reddish-green perennial herb. Rosette-leaves few, 20-50 × 5-9 mm, narrow-spathulate, apex acute, apiculate, basally attenuate, gradually tapering into winged petiole 10-45 mm long, followed by a broad sheathing base; hairs fine, silky, scarcely overlapping, appressed to spreading, distinctly retrorse on undersides, with the hairs of the leaf margins and sheathing leaf-base distinctly longer than those of the rest of the leaf. Lateral branches numerous, widely spreading, at first suberect, soon erect, up to 200 mm, internodes > leaves, with hairs fringing margins. Stem-leaves few, clearly distinct from rosette-leaves, c. 8 × 3 mm., narrow-oblong, sessile, acute; hairs fine and silky on upper surface, coarser and sparser on undersides, long and fringing on margin. Cymes simple, ebracteate, c.12-15-flowered, c.50-80 mm long; internodes > calyx in fruit; pedicels up to 4 mm long. Calyx 3-4 mm long, lobes > ½ length, narrow, subacute; hairs on lobes long, flexuous, basally in mixtures of shorter, appressed and longer hooked ones. Corolla white with a yellow eye, c.8-10 mm diameter, tube funnelform and c.5 mm long with scales set well above level of calyx-tips, lobes c.3.0 × 2.5 mm, ± oblong; filaments fixed about level of scales, > anthers and carrying them well above scales to level of lobes, anthers 1.1-1.3 mm long; style » calyx in fruit, stigma capitate. Nutlets ovoid, pale-brown.

SIMILAR TAXA

An ultramafic endemic known only from one site on the Red Hills, above the Wairau River, Marlborough. In the field it is easily distinguished from the only other common reddish coloured forget-me-not present in that area *Myosotis monroi*. That species has yellow not white flowers borne on compact rather than elongated inflorescences, and the leaf hairs are sparse, uniformly short, stiff and closely appressed, rather than fine and silky, and retrorse on the leaf undersides.

FLOWERING

December - February

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

December - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

THREATS

The only recently confirmed population occurs within habitat threatened to a degree through despoilation by 4-wheel drivers (this threat has been curbed to some extent by the erection of a vehicle barrier). Wilding pines are a major threat to the whole of the Red Hills. Potential threats include deer and goats though as yet there has been no evidence of browsing pressure on the *Myosotis* from these animals.

ETYMOLOGY

myosotis: Mouse-eared

laeta: Happy or vivid

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 February 2008. Description based on herbarium specimens.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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