

# Myosotis lyallii subsp. lyallii

## SYNONYMS

*Myosotis lyallii* Hook.f. var. *lyallii*, *Myosotis lyallii* var. *townsonii* (Cheeseman) L.B.Moore, *Myosotis townsonii* Cheeseman

## FAMILY

Boraginaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Myosotis lyallii* subsp. *lyallii* Hook.f.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

MYOLYA

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Data Deficient

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands

## HABITAT

Subalpine to alpine in fellfield, cushion-bog, and solifluction lobes and bordering areas of snow-melt,

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Compact, usually solitary rosette-forming perennial herb. Rosette-leaves c.15-35 × 4-7 mm, elliptic, elliptic-obovate to ovate-spathulate, petiole about equal in length to lamina, tip obtuse, sometimes apiculate; hairs flexuous, longer on margins, absent or very sparse on the leaf undersides. Lateral branches few, decumbent, rarely > 80 mm long, internodes equal to or less than length of leaves. Stem-leaves smaller and narrower than rosette-leaves, tip subacute; hairs flexuous, sparser on undersurface. Cymes usually simple, few-flowered, 10-20 mm long, bracts usually associated with lowermost 2-3 flowers; internodes usually less than calyx in fruit. Calyx 4-6 mm long, lobes cut to about half the length or less of calyx, subacute; hairs of several lengths, flexuous, long on margins. Corolla white, usually c.7-8 mm diameter, tube conspicuously longer than calyx, cylindric, lobes c.3 × 2 mm, oblong; filaments fixed between or just below scales, equal to or longer than anthers which are held wholly above scales; style c.2× calyx in fruit, stigma capitate. Nutlet 1.6-1.8 × 1.1-1.2 mm, ovate-elliptic, black.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Myosotis lyallii* is distinguished by the consistently exserted anthers (i.e. located above the corolla-scales), partially ebracteate cymes, and inflorescences of less than 8 narrow-tubed flowers (with up to 3 of the lowest bracteate), decumbent lateral branches which are rarely greater than 80 mm long, and by the adaxially copious flexuous rather than hooked or retrorse leaf hairs and abaxially near glabrous leaf surface.



Gertrude Valley. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



Gertrude Valley, Fiordland. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

## FLOWERING

October - March

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

December - May

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. However, plants are short-lived and prone to fungal diseases in humid climates.

## ETYMOLOGY

**myosotis:** Mouse-eared

**lyallii:** Named after David Lyall (1817-1895), 19th century Scottish naturalist and surgeon with the Royal Navy, who explored Antarctica, New Zealand, the Arctic and North America and was a lifelong friend of Sir Joseph Hooker.

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

## NOTES ON TAXONOMY

Moore (in Allan 1961) recognised at the rank of variety *M. lyallii* var. *townsonii* (previously regarded as a species *M. townsonii*). This variety differs from var. *lyallii* by its laxer growth habit; rather sparser and more widely spaced hairs on the leaves and calyx; calyx lobes cut to about half the length of the calyx (mostly one third in var. *lyallii*) and by the anther filaments being wholly rather than partially exerted. Most botanists do not regard these differences as sufficient to maintain the two varieties and this view is followed here. *Myosotis elderi* accepted by the Flora of New Zealand treatments was in the view of the late A. P. Druce merely a northerly expression of *M. lyallii*. That unpublished opinion requires further study.

## ATTRIBUTION

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

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/myosotis-lyallii-subsp-lyallii/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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