Myosotis macrantha

COMMON NAMES
bronze forget-me-not

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Not Threatened
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS
Orange, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Robust, tufted, grey-green, green to dark green, perennial herb. Rosettes few or many, leaves obovate, obovate-lanceolate to lanceolate-spathulate, 30-120 × 6-20 mm, narrowing rather abruptly to subacute tip and gradually to broad petiole almost as long as lamina; hairs tapering and flexuous, appressed or spreading, on undersurface shorter, sparser, often appressed, retrorse except sts at tip. Lateral branches few per rosette, ascending to erect, up to 300 mm long, internodes usually < leaves. Stem-leaves decreasing upwards, lower ones oblong, uppermost c.20 × 6 mm, lanceolate with truncate base and subacute tip; hairs long, fine, usually crowded and appressed on upper surface, on undersurface sparser, shorter and more spreading, often retrorse towards base of lower stem-leaves. Cymes ebracteate, usually simple or once branched, 8-flowered, up to 70 mm long in fruit, internodes < calyx in fruit; pedicels very short, Calyx 6-9 mm long, lobes usually slightly > 1/2 length, obtuse, rather broad; hairs long and spreading near top, medium and hooked about middle, short and spreading or retrorse near base, short appressed hairs throughout. Corolla yellow, orange, brownish orange to almost black, narrow-funnelform, 6-8 mm diameter, tube up to 10 mm. (occasionally 15 mm) to level of scales, more to sinus of lobes; scales small or absent, sometimes variously developed in one flower, lobes rounded, c.3.0 × 2.5 mm, not widely spreading; filaments broad, fixed just below scales (if any), about equal to anthers which are 1·5-2·2 mm long and wholly above scale-level; style at least 2× calyx in fruit, stigma capitate. Nutlet 2.4-3.5 × 1.4-2.0 mm long, ovate-elliptic to elliptic, black-brown to black.



Lake Peel, Cobb, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Birch Hill Stream, Mt Cook, February. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA
Myosotis macrantha is a rather variable but extremely distinctive species easily recognised by its robust growth habit and colourful flowers which can be fixed or grade on a plant from yellow through orange to orange-brown or almost black. It is closely allied to Myosotis arnoldii from which it differs by the grey-green, green to dark green (rather than silvery) colour of the vegetative parts, by the rosette leaves which are broader than the stem leaves (in M. arnoldii rosette and stem leaves are of equal width), and by the presence of retrorse rather than straight hairs on the leaves. The flowers of Myosotis macrantha differ from M. arnoldii only in that their lobes seem to spread more widely (and they show a greater range of colours). Vegetatively Myosotis macrantha is impossible to distinguish from the narrow-range endemic M. explanata though the long narrow strongly coloured flowers of M. macrantha with the anthers exserted wholly beyond the ill-developed scales differ greatly from the shorter, salverform, pure white flowers of M. explanata whose anthers are scarcely exserted and whose filaments are positioned below the large scales.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic: South Island: Nelson to south-western Otago and northern Southland

HABITAT
Alpine. Common in damp sites within grassland, on rocky ground, on cliff faces and rock outcrops

GENUS
Myosotis

FAMILY
Boraginaceae

AUTHORITY
Myosotis macrantha (Hook.f.) Benth. et Hook.f.

SYNONYMS
Exarrhena macrantha Hook.f., Myosotis macrantha var. diversa G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson, Myosotis macrantha var. pulchra Cheeseman, Myosotis macrantha var. westlandica Petrie

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
December - March

FRUITING
Febuary - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Somewhat difficult. Can be grown in a rock garden or alpine house but results vary. Like all indigenous Myosotis this species is sensitive to humidity and prone to fungal attacks from mildews and rusts in muggy weather. In some parts of New Zealand, such as the South Island this species can be easily cultivated.

ETYMOLOGY
myosotis: Mouse-eared
macrantha: Big flowered

NVS CODE
MYOMAC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 48

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Declining | Qualifiers: DPS, NStr, Sp, 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. Goverment Printer, Wellington.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 February 2008; Description based on Allan (1961)
Some of this factsheet information is derived from Flora of New Zealand Online and is used under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand licence.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

25 May 2026