

Ourisia confertifolia

COMMON NAMES

mountain foxglove

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White



Mt Burns (January). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Ourisia confertifolia. Photographer: Heidi Meudt, Licence: All rights reserved.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial herbs 35-88 mm tall, with erect inflorescences and repent leaves; stems 2.3-4.3 mm diameter; internodes 1.2-6.3 mm long, glabrous. Leaves rosulate, congested, rarely in subrosettes or opposite on creeping stem; petiole 3.5-15.0 x 1.6-8.6 mm, glabrescent, bearing sparse glandular/eglandular hairs on margins only; lamina 4.8-15.3 x 5.5-16.3 mm, spatulate, broadly to very broadly obovate, apex rounded, base cuneate, tapering with wide petiole, margin crenate or notched, upper surface glandular/eglandular silky-hairy, undersides punctate, glabrescent, with sparse glandular/eglandular hairs on the prominent veins. Inflorescences 1-6-flowered raceme, 35-105 mm long, bracteate bearing 1-3- flowering nodes, each bearing 2 bracts and 1-2 flowers; peduncles 0.9-2.3 mm diameter, glandular/eglandular pilose, villous. Floral bracts up to 7.7-12.6 x 3.8-7.6 mm, sessile, parallel to, and clasping peduncle, oblanceolate to broadly obovate, margin with regular to irregular notches near apex, densely glandular/eglandular pilose, villous. Flowers 11.8-19.3 x 9.4-16.5 mm; pedicel 7.5-20.3 mm long, glandular/eglandular pilose to villous. Calyx 5.5-8.8 x 4.5-11.3 mm, irregular, externally and on margins glandular/eglandular villous; anterior calyx lobes 4.6-9.4 x 1.9-3.9 mm, posterior calyx lobes 1.1-2.0 x 1.3-2.9 mm, 3 posterior lobes divided 1.4 the length of the calyx or less, 2 anterior lobes divided to near base, lanceolate to narrowly ovate, tapering to a subacute or rounded apex, undersides prominently 3-veined. Corolla 14.5-19.4 x 17.7-20.6 mm when flattened, bilabiate, tubular-funnelform, straight or curved, white, glabrous externally; tube 4.8-11.0 x 4.4-6.4 mm at apex, 2.0-3.9 mm at base, not constricted near base, yellow inside, glabrous; anterior corolla lobes 6.8-9.6 x 3.3-7.3 mm at widest point, 1.8-3.0 mm wide at base, posterior corolla lobes 5.5-7.3 x 2.7-6.1 mm wide at widest point, 1.7-3.0 mm wide at base, spreading, obovate apex plane, sometimes undulate or irregular. Stamens 4, didynamous; comprising two long stamens 6.1-7.6 mm long, included or exerted, and two short stamens 3.8-6.0 mm long, included or equal with lip; anthers 0.6-1.8 x 0.7-1.6 mm, reniform to horseshoe-shaped; staminode c.0.2 mm long, inserted c.0.1 mm above base of corolla, or absent. Style 3.2-4.8 mm long, base slightly bent, included or slightly exerted; stigma 0.4-1.0 mm diameter, emarginate; ovary 2.6-4.6 x 1.8-3.7 mm, glabrous. Capsules 4.5-7.1 x 3.3-4.8 mm, glabrous, with loculicidal dehiscence; fruiting pedicels 15.1-21.6 mm long. Seeds 0.7-1.0 x 0.4-0.5 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

From all other *Ourisia* except *O. simpsonii* (L.B.Moore) Arroyo, it differs by the yellow, glabrous internal corolla tube, irregular calyces, glabrous leaf undersides, bracts, and paired flowers (which are never in whorls) in each flowering node. From *O. simpsonii* it differs by the smaller, narrower flowers and shorter styles (up to 4.9 cf. up to 7.5 mm). The corolla tube of *O. simpsonii* is sometimes purple (externally and internally), a colour never seen in *O. confertifolia*. Both species are allopatric, with *O. simpsonii* restricted to the northern half of the South Island and *O. confertifolia* the southern third.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island westerly from Haast Pass south to Fiordland

HABITAT

Alpine (1200 - 2200 m a.s.l.) on soil or bare rock, boulders, cliff faces and rock crevices or in open herbfield and tussock grassland.

THREATS

Not Threatened. Listed because it is considered to be a localised endemic.

GENUS

Ourisia

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Ourisia confertifolia Arroyo

SYNONYMS

None (described in 1984)

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November - February

FRUITING

January - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - should not be removed from the wild

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ETYMOLOGY

ourisia: After Ouris, governor of the Falkland Islands

NVS CODE

OURCON

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 48

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

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, NS, NStr, RR, Sp, St
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

Meudt, H.M. 2006: Monograph of *Ourisia* (Plantaginaceae), Systematic Botany Monographs 77. 188pp.

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Meudt (2006).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ourisia-confertifolia/>

PDF DATE

08 July 2026