

# Plantago aucklandica

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rosette plants; primary root 6-25 mm thick. Leaves all basal, 5-13 per rosette, usually brown, rarely green when dry, narrowly angular-ovate, narrowly obovate or obovate, widest point above middle, 50-116 × 14-50 mm; axillary hairs rust coloured, usually very obvious, rarely slightly visible, up to 6-40mm long. Lamina 40-116 mm long, elliptic, rhombic, angular-obovate, widest point usually above or at middle, rarely below middle, usually punctate, rarely not so, glabrous adaxially, abaxially rarely with isolated hairs on midrib; hairs patent and 0.4-2.2mm; veins 3-7; lamina apex acute or obtuse; base usually attenuate, sometimes cuneate; margins subentire, with 0-24 minute, rarely small, obtuse, regular or irregular teeth up to 0.2-1.6 mm long, glabrous or with isolated hairs; petiole sometimes distinguishable from lamina, 14-55 × 6.3-19.0 mm at narrowest point. Inflorescences erect, 1-6 per rosette, 117-338 mm long (including spikes); scapes elongating before anthesis, not ribbed, 62-206 × 6-8 mm at fruiting, with isolated hairs, sparsely hairy or densely hairy, becoming glabrous; hairs patent; spikes 36-136 × 6-8 mm at fruiting, linear-ovoid. Flowers 44-132 per spike, densely crowded especially above, more distant below (up to 12 mm apart), half of flowers found in upper 1/3 to 1/4 of spike; bracts 1 per flower, ovate, broadly ovate or very broadly ovate, obtuse, 1.7-2.9 × 0.8-2.1 mm; bract margins glabrous or with isolated hairs near apex and outer surface glabrous; bract axils densely hairy, 1.1-2.3 mm long; calyx usually shorter, rarely longer than capsule, 1.8-2.6 × 1.3-2.3mm wide; calyx lobes 1.5-2.4 × 1.3-1.8 mm, ovate or broadly ovate, obtuse; calyx lobe margins scarious and glabrous, middle coloured part 0.4-1.0 mm wide, outer surface glabrous; corolla tube 1.5-2.5 mm long, longer than lobes; corolla lobes narrowly ovate or ovate, acute, 1.1-1.7 × 0.4-0.8 mm; stamen filaments 2.3-4.4 mm long, attached to lower half of corolla tube 0.4-1.2 mm from tube base; anthers 1.0-1.5mm long; style 2.3-4.2 mm long, densely hairy throughout; stigma filiform, undifferentiated from style; ovary 0.8-1.4 × 0.5-1.0 mm; ovules 2. Capsules 2.0-3.0 × 1.3-2.3 mm, 0.6-1.7 mm deep; ellipsoid, broadly ellipsoid, rhomboid or angular-obovoid, widest at middle or upper half, septum not reaching top of capsule, not forming an upper compartment to one side, lower portion 1.0-2.0 mm long, cup-shaped. Seeds 1-2 per capsule, 1.3-2.0 × 0.8-1.6 mm, uniform, ellipsoid. broadly ellipsoid, rarely rhomboid or broadly rhomboid, brown or dark brown; edges rounded.



In short herbfield dominated by *Damnomenia vernicosa*, near the Western Cliffs, north of the Hooker Hills, main Auckland Island, January 2023. Photographer: Alex Fergus, Date taken: 14/01/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.



In short herbfield dominated by *Damnomenia vernicosa*, near the Western Cliffs, north of the Hooker Hills, main Auckland Island, January 2023. Photographer: Alex Fergus, Date taken: 14/01/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Meudt (2012) notes that *Plantago aucklandica* is distinguished from all other New Zealand indigenous species of *Plantago*, by its few, large leaves with up to seven veins, by the wide petioles long (> 15 mm) axillary hairs, long spikes with many flowers (up to 132) and with spike length : width ratio 4.5-20:1. Other notable features include the presence of only two ovules per ovary, one of which usually aborts resulting in the presence of 1(-2) seeds per capsule. In addition, seeds are colliculate on the ventral surface, whereas seeds of all other native species are reticulate on the ventral surface (Webb & Simpson 2001)

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: Auckland Islands

## HABITAT

Confined to higher elevations on the Auckland Islands where it grows in fellfield and marshy places and on bare wind-blown areas or rock outcrops

## THREATS

*Plantago aucklandica* is endemic to the Auckland Islands where it is naturally confined to several high-elevation localities . Meudt (2012) argues that because it is not known how many mature individuals exist and how population sizes are changing over time, and there are very few recent collections of this species, then, as a precautionary measure the qualifier 'DP' (Data Poor) should also be appended to the current threat assessment. This action has been agreed upon by the Indigenous Vascular Plant Threat Listing Panel (P. J. de Lange unpubl. data).

## GENUS

*Plantago*

## FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Plantago aucklandica* Hook.f.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

November - February

## FRUITING

November - February

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Occasionally cultivated. Can be grown in an rock garden or alpine house but fickle. Resents humidity and drought, prone to powdery mildew

## WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

## ETYMOLOGY

**plantago**: Old Latin name for flat-leaved plants

**aucklandica**: Of the Auckland Islands

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, IE, RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, IE, RR

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Meudt, H.M. 2012: A taxonomic revision of native New Zealand *Plantago* (Plantaginaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 50: 101-178.

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2001: *Seeds of New Zealand gymnosperms and dicotyledons*. Christchurch, The Caxton Press. 428 p.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 18 June 2012. Description adapted from Meudt (2012).

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/plantago-aucklandica/>

## PDF DATE

27 May 2026