Plantago udicola

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Rosette plants; primary root 3-20 mm thick. Leaves all basal, 8-19 to per rosette, green or brown when dry, usually narrowly angular-obovate, rarely narrowly obovate, widest point above middle, 16-186 × 4-27mm wide; axillary hairs ferrugineous, slightly to very visible, up to 5-23mm long. Lamina narrowly elliptic, elliptic, narrowly rhombic, rhombic, narrowly angular-obovate or angular-obovate, widest point usually at middle, sometimes above middle, 13-175 mm long, usually not punctate, rarely punctate, usually with isolated hairs or sparsely hairy, rarely densely hairy adaxially, glabrous, with isolated hairs or sparsely hairy, especially along midrib and margins, rarely densely hairy abaxially; hairs patent and 0.5-3.6 mm; veins 1-5; lamina apex usually acute, rarely obtuse; base attenuate or cuneate; margins entire or subentire with wavy and irregular margins, with 4-12 minute, small, medium or large, obtuse, regular or irregular teeth up to 0.3-4.6mm long, with patchy isolated hairs to sparsely hairy; petiole usually distinguishable from lamina, 6.0-75.0 × 1.1-6.8 mm. Inflorescences erect, 3-18 per rosette, 62-266 mm long (including spikes); scapes elongating before anthesis, not ribbed, 3-250 × 4-8 mm thick at fruiting, sparsely to densely hairy, especially near top; trichomes patent (distally antrorse); spikes usually long and linear-ovoid, sometimes ovoid, rarely globose, 5-28 × 4-8 mm thick at fruiting. Flowers 2-32 per spike, usually densely crowded, rarely more distant below (up to 4 mm apart); bracts 1 per flower, ovate, broadly ovate or very broadly ovate, acute or obtuse, 1.8-3.5 × 0.8-2.2mm wide; bract margins with isolated hairs or sparsely hairy and outer surface glabrous or with isolated hairs along midrib; bract axils usually sparsely hairy, rarely with isolated hairs or densely hairy, 0.9-2.4 mm long; calyx usually shorter, rarely longer than capsule, 2.2-3.5 × 1.4-2.9 mm; calyx lobes 1.9-3.3 × 1.1-2.5 mm, ovate, acute or obtuse; calyx lobe margins scarious and usually with isolated hairs at apex, rarely glabrous, middle coloured part 0.3-0.9mm wide, outer surface glabrous or with isolated hairs on midrib; corolla tube 1.8-3.7 mm long, longer than lobes; corolla lobes 1.1-2.9 × 0.6-1.3 mm, usually narrowly ovate or ovate, rarely broadly ovate, acute; stamen filaments 2.0-7.5mm long, usually attached to lower half, rarely upper half of corolla tube 0.2-1.7 mm; anthers 1.5-2.2 mm long; style 2.2-6.4 mm long, densely hairy throughout; stigma filiform, undifferentiated from style; ovary 0.6-1.8 × 0.5-1.3 mm; ovules 4-5. Capsules 2.1-4.7 × 1.4-3.2 × 0.8-1.9 mm, ellipsoid, broadly ellipsoid or ovoid, rarely rhomboid, broadly rhomboid or broadly ovoid, widest at lower half or middle, septum usually reaching top of capsule, not forming an upper compartment to one side. Seeds 1-4 per capsule, 1.1-2.5 × 0.6-1.4 mm uniform, usually ellipsoid, rarely narrowly ellipsoid, rust, brown or dark brown, edges rounded.



Lake Daniells, Canterbury. Photographer: Rowan Hindmarsh-Walls, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Lake Daniells, Canterbury. Photographer: Rowan Hindmarsh-Walls, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA
Plantago udicola is distinguished from other species of *Plantago* by the following suite of characters: 1-4 ellipsoid, uniform seeds; scapes with type 'i' and type 'g' hairs (see Meudt 2012); bracts that are sparsely minute ciliate or with isolated hairs along the whole margin; sepal margins with one or few isolated hairs at apex only. It is also ecologically distinct from *P. spathulata*, *P. picta* and *P. raoulii*, being found in boggy habitats of tussock lands and herb fields above 600 m, and cytologically distinct, as it is a 16-ploid, whereas the other three species are octoploids.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. New Zealand: North and South Islands (Central Volcanic Plateau otherwise North-West Nelson south to Fiordland).

HABITAT
Subalpine to alpine. In open or sheltered tussockland, herb fields, scrub seeps, creeks, flushes, bogs, damp hollows, swampy patches, wet ground and lake shores; at base of bluffs, on schist, greywacke, silt or peaty soil.

THREATS
Not Threatened but would warrant more survey to make sure this assessment is correct (Meudt 2012, p. 152).

GENUS
Plantago

FAMILY
Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY
Plantago udicola Meudt et Garn.-Jones

SYNONYMS
None (first described 2012)

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
November - February

FRUITING
December - June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from fresh seed and transplants.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING
OBL: Obligate Wetland
Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY
plantago: Old Latin name for flat-leaved plants

NVS CODE
PLAUDI

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 96

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DP
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, NS, RR Help
Current regional threat status assessments prepared according to Crisp et al. (2025) are displayed when available. The 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. 2012: A taxonomic revision of native New Zealand *Plantago* (Plantaginaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany 50*: 101-178.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange 18 June 2012. Description adapted from Meudt (2012).

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/plantago-udicola/

PDF DATE

25 August 2026