

Potamogeton suboblongus

COMMON NAMES

mud pondweed

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Aquatic, submerged or floating, or ± semi-terrestrial on muddy ground and seepages, rhizomatous little-branched, perennial herb. Rhizomes usually buried in firm mud; leafy branches erect, usually simple, long or short, often rooted at leaf-bearing nodes. Stipules c.20–30 mm long, free, open, membranous and often conspicuous. Leaves weakly dimorphic, entire; lower leaves apparently not regularly submersed, similar to upper leaves, being somewhat more narrowly elliptic and with fewer, more obscure nerves than emergent leaves; upper and emergent leaves long- or short-petiolate, lamina 15–60 × 8–35 mm, broad-elliptic, rarely oval, subacute and sometimes shortly attenuate at tip, firm and opaque, longitudinal nerves 11–21 in all, usually several laterals emerging from midrib. Inflorescence a densely flowered spike, 10–20 mm long. Peduncles arising in axils of upper leaves, simple, stout, erect, standing well above leaves. Achenes c.2.0 × 1.5 mm, reddish when ripe, neither flattened nor strongly keeled, beak short but slightly curved.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *Potamogeton cheesemanii* by the scarcely dimorphic foliage (i.e. only slight differences between submersed and emergent leaves), by the near absence of submersed leaves (these if present of similar size and shape to emergent foliage), by the broadly elliptic, subacute floating leaves, which have usually 6 or more nerves on either side of midrib; and by the swollen, reddish, not or only weakly keeled achenes.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North, South and Stewart Islands

HABITAT

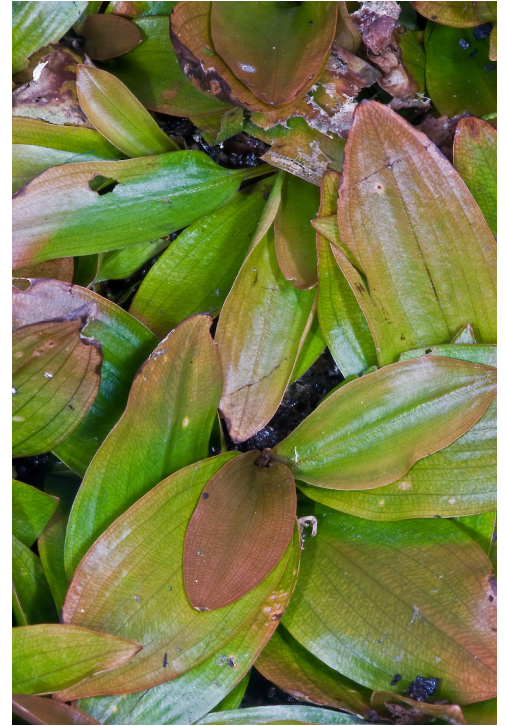
Coastal to subalpine, being mostly found in upper montane and subalpine areas in the northern part of its range. *Potamogeton suboblongus* is more commonly found in shallow, muddy hollows in forest, and colonising tarns and alpine soaks and pools which may partially dry out in summer.

GENUS

Potamogeton

FAMILY

Potamogetonaceae



In cultivation ex Pureora. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 29/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Central Southland. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 26/02/2016, Licence: CC BY-NC.

AUTHORITY

Potamogeton suboblongus Hagström

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

December - March

FRUITING

January - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces and fresh seed, An attractive plant for a small, shallow pond or damp, shaded hollow. In warmer, lowland areas this species prefers a cool site

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

potamogeton: River dweller

suboblongus: Nearly oblong

NVS CODE

POTSUB

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Extirpated | Qualifiers: EW, TL Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland](#)" Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

Otago: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, DPR, DPT, DPS, Sp 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

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (16 February 2012). Description adapted from Moore & Edgar (1970).

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NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/potamogeton-suboblongus/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/potamogeton-suboblongus/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026