

Prunella vulgaris

COMMON NAMES

self-heal

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Self-heal is a low-growing, spreading by rooting at nodes; a perennial of the mint family. It has distinctive puckered leaves with an opposite arrangement on square stems. The ovate leaves (wider at the base and tapering toward the apex) are covered with short, coarse hairs. When viewing this plant from directly above, each set of leaves is rotated ninety degrees from the previous set.

HABITAT

Because of its low growth habit, self-heal all can often escape detection until firmly established in the lawn. The first signs of of the plant are during flowering when hundreds of purple (occasionally mauve) flowers on short compact spikes are seen above the ground.

GENUS

Prunella

FAMILY

Lamiaceae

AUTHORITY

Prunella vulgaris L.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

Self heal flowers in early-to-mid summer on stems that extend above the ground

YEAR NATURALISED

1867

ORIGIN

N. temperate

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Horticultural

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).



Silverstream, Upper Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 20/05/2006, Licence: CC BY.



Pale corolla form (the only form locally), mown lawn, Durie Hill, Whanganui. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 08/12/2017, Licence: CC BY-NC.

EXTRA INFORMATION

The common name derives from the use of some species to treat a range of minor disorders. It is reported to have an antiseptic and antibacterial effect, and to be particularly good in cases of food poisoning.

NVS CODE

PRUVUL

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/prunella-vulgaris/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026