

# Ranunculus paucifolius

## COMMON NAME

Castle Hill buttercup

## SYNONYMS

*Ranunculus crithmifolius* subsp. *pauciflorus* (Kirk) F.J.F.Fisher; *Ranunculus crithmifolius* Hook.f. pro parte

## FAMILY

Ranunculaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Ranunculus paucifolius* Kirk

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

RANPAU

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 48

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, DP, OL

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Canterbury)

## HABITAT

Montane. Restricted to limestone colluvium and tallus in a gently sloping basin.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Robust, summer-green, glabrous herb, up to 100 mm high. Rhizome up to 180 mm long, stout, sometimes branched, with thick vertical fibres; stock stout, erect or ascending, up to 40 mm long. Rosette leaves 1–20; lamina 20–70 × 20–60 mm, spreading, broadly reniform or broadly orbicular, grey to grey-green, often purplish, nearly entire or divided into 3–5 primary segments, segments usually shallow divided although occasionally up to 3/4 lamina depth, overlapping, margin finely dentate, base cuneate to subreniform; petiole 20–60 × 1.5–4.5 mm; sheath at base, broad. Scape 10–20 mm long, solitary, stout, naked, 1-flowered; reflexed at maturity. Flowers 20–50 mm diameter. Sepals 5, 8–11 × 4–6 mm, pale yellow, deflexed, ovate-oblong, apex subacute. Petals 5–10, 15–20 × 6–13 mm, golden yellow, broadly obovate, obovate to oblanceolate, apex obtuse to rounded, nectary 1–3 simple pits. Stamens 23–38; filament 3.5–5.0 mm long; anthers 1.8–2.2 mm long. Carpels 17–35. Achenes 3.0–4.2 mm long, brown; beak curved, laterally compressed, tapering toward apex.



*Ranunculus pauciflorus*. Photographer: Brian P. Molloy, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 04/11/2021, Licence: CC BY-NC.

### SIMILAR TAXA

Most similar to *R. crithmifolius* from which it is distinguished by the leaves having three or occasionally five shallow and usually overlapping lobes that are rarely dissected to the base, the margins are finely and sharply toothed, and the base truncate to cuneate. In contrast, *R. crithmifolius* has leaves that are trifoliolate, each lobe is further divided for about one third of the depth, and the margins are more coarsely and deeply toothed to crenate.

### FLOWERING

October–December

### FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

### FRUITING

November–January

### PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

### THREATS

A limestone endemic that is naturally restricted to a very small geographical area. Plants are vulnerable to browse damage from rabbits, hares and sheep, weeds are a constant threat, and seedlings are rarely seen.

### ETYMOLOGY

**ranunculus:** From the Latin 'rana' frog, meaning little frog and probably refers to the plants typical marshy habit where frogs abound

**paucifolius:** Few leaves

### WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

### ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Kirk (1899), Allan (1961), Fisher (1965) and herbarium specimens.

### MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ranunculus-paucifolius/>