

Ranunculus pinguis

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Short, stout and rather fleshy perennial rosette forming herb 50–250 mm high, all parts glabrous or sparsely pilose hairy. **Rhizome** fleshy 7–12 mm diam., bearing many fleshy white roots. **Leaves** on stout fleshy petioles 20–100 mm long, with very broad, stout, fleshy sheathing bases; lamina 20–80 mm diam., dark green, reniform, deeply lobed, with lobes also crenate. **Flowering scape** 1–3, usually 1-flowered, unbranched, as long or longer than leaves, stout, naked or with 1–2 small linear bracts above middle. **Flowers** 20–30 mm diameter; sepals 5–6, oblong; petals 6–10, pale yellow, narrow-obovate or linear-oblong, small and stiff, hardly as long as sepals, glossy portion reduced, with single or occasionally multiple nectaries at base; receptacle broadly oblong. **Achenes** numerous, small, glabrous or with short scattered hairs in upper part of body and lower part of beak; body obovate-oblong or elliptic oblong 1.4–2.0 mm long, pale brown, orange or dark red-brown, beak 1.1–2.0 mm long, straight, bent or curved to ventral side.

SIMILAR TAXA

Very distinctive. The only large buttercup found on the Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku. It appears closest to *Ranunculus pachyrrhizus* and *R. viridis*. It differs from *R. pachyrrhizus* by its glabrous to sparsely hairy rather than densely hairy leaves which are shallowly 3–7-lobed and 20–80 mm diameter, rather than 1–2-ternatifid and 15–30 mm diameter, and by the short, ascending, deeply buried rather long trailing exposed rhizomes. *Ranunculus viridis* is a much smaller bright green plant confined to the southern end of Stewart Island/Rakiura.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku.

HABITAT

From sea level to 600 m a.s.l. Growing in damp to flooded ground within grassland and in rocky fell field and moors.

THREATS

Not Threatened. Listed because it is a narrow range island endemic. It is however, abundant within its known habitats.

GENUS

Ranunculus

FAMILY

Ranunculaceae



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Campbell Island. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.

AUTHORITY

Ranunculus pinguis Hook.f.

SYNONYMS

Ranunculus pinguis var. pilosus Hook.f., Ranunculus pinguis var. rhombifolius Hook.f.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

December–January

FRUITING

February–April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

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

NVS CODE

RANPIN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 48

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Fisher FJF. 1965. The alpine *Ranunculi* of New Zealand. *New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research Bulletin 165*: 1–192.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (12 February 2007). Description based on Fisher (1965).

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

08 June 2026