

# Ranunculus scrithalis

## COMMON NAME

Eyre Mountains buttercup

## SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1987)

## FAMILY

Ranunculaceae

## AUTHORITY

Ranunculus scrithalis Garn.-Jones

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL, Sp

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, Eyre Mountains.

## HABITAT

Alpine (1100-1900 m a.s.l.). Growing in fine, moist clay underlying shingle slides and within stable scree.

## FEATURES

Stout perennial forming small, solitary tufts up to 200 mm tall; rhizome stout, fleshy ascending to trailing (well buried within fine clay and shingle). Leaves usually partially buried in shingle often with just the tips protruding, 30-150 mm long, broadly ovate, dark glaucous-grey to glaucous green, with tips tinged red, broadly ovate, deeply 2-3-terantisect, lamina covered with fine silky hairs; ultimate lobes linear, subacute. Scapes 1-flowered, erect, thickly invested in fine silky hairs. Flowers 20-30 mm diameter. Sepals spreading, narrowly ovate, finely covered with silky hairs. Petals 12-15, up to 15 mm long, lemon yellow, linear-oblong, nectary solitary, c.6 mm from petal base, annular. Receptacle glabrous. Achenes numerous, turgid, sparsely silky hairy; body 2-2.5 mm long, beak 3-3.5 mm long.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Somewhat similar to *R. haastii* Hook.f. and *R. buchananii* Hook.f. From *R. buchananii* it differs by its yellow rather than white flowers, glabrous receptacle, and by the middle leaf segment which is sessile rather than stipitate. Ecologically both species also differ. *R. buchananii* favours stable debris slopes, rock ledges and crevices kept damp by meltwater, and in close proximity to permanent snow and ice fields. *R. scrithalis* grows in fine, damp clay partially buried within scree and shingle slides. From *R. haastii*, *R. scrithalis* differs by its allopatric distribution, silky hairy leaves, hairy rather than glabrescent or glabrous achenes, and subacute to rounded rather than truncate to retuse petals



Ranunculus scrithalis, Eyre Mountains.  
Photographer: John Barkla



Eyre Mts – Bowels of the Earth at approximately 1600m. Photographer: Sue Lake

## FLOWERING

December - January

## FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

## FRUITING

February - April

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild

## THREATS

Apparently very local in its distribution. Probably threatened by browsing animals. This species may be more threatened than is currently believed.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Ranunculus scirithalis* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ranunculus-scirithalis/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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