

Stellaria alsine

COMMON NAMES

bog stitchwort

BIOSTATUS

Exotic

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Small herb with thin straggling stems, often scrambling through taller vegetation, leaves lance-shaped, usually up to 12 mm long and 5 mm wide in pairs along the stem, with small groups of flowers up to 6 mm across, the green sepals longer than the white divided petals.

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial. Stems weak, ascending, 4-angled, glabrous, (8)-10-20-(50) cm long. Lvs green, sessile except on overwintering vegetative shoots, connate in pairs, lanceolate to oblanceolate to narrow-oblong, becoming linear-lanceolate above, tapering gradually to acute apex and glabrous or ciliate base, (5)-8-12-(25) × 2-5-(8) mm; margins usually closely undulate when dry; marginal vein ± distinct. Infl. axillary, cymose, lax, (1)-3-10-flowered. Bracts narrow-lanceolate, not keeled, scarious with green midrib, glabrous, 1.5-3 mm long. Pedicels slender, erecto-patent to patent, glabrous, 8-18 mm long. Sepals narrow-triangular, acute, 3-veined, (2)-2.5-3 mm long; margins scarious, glabrous. Petals < sepals. Stamens 10. Capsule narrow-ovoid, = sepals. Seeds red-brown, c. 0.5 mm long, with very short tubercles.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to stitchwort (*S. graminea*), but has shorter, relatively broader leaves, fewer flowered inflorescences and divided petals shorter than the sepals.

DISTRIBUTION

Scattered throughout the North, South and Stewart Islands, with the exception of Northland and Auckland.

HABITAT

Wide range of wet habitats including water body margins, wet pasture, seepages and roadsides.

GENUS

Stellaria

FAMILY

Caryophyllaceae

AUTHORITY

Stellaria alsine Grimm

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September to May



FRUITING

November to May

YEAR NATURALISED

1899

ORIGIN

Europe

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Unknown, seed or soil contaminant

CONTROL TECHNIQUES

Not controlled in New Zealand.

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seed dispersed by water and contaminated machinery.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

stellaria: Star flower

alsine: Like a chickweed, from the Greek alsos 'grove' often the habitat of chickweeds

NVS CODE

STEALS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. (1988). Flora of New Zealand Volume 4: Naturalised pteridophytes, gymnosperms, dicotyledons. Botany Division, DSIR, Christchurch.

Johnson PN, Brooke PA (1989). Wetland plants in New Zealand. DSIR Field Guide, DSIR Publishing, Wellington. 319pp.

ATTRIBUTION

Prepared by Paul Champion and Deborah Hofstra (NIWA). Features description from Webb et al. (1988).

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/stellaria-alsine/>

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