Wahlenbergia albomarginata subsp. flexilis

COMMON NAMES
Ward harebell, Marlborough harebell

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS
Cream, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Perennial herb with radical, rosulate tufts of leaves, sometimes alternate on elongated stems (shade form). Leaves more or less petiolate, entire (only dentate in deep shade), lamina 10 × 2 to 40 × 10 mm, prostrate leaves ovate to orbicular-spathulate (sometimes tufted along the elongating ascending stems in shade forms), gradually narrowed to petiole as long as the lamina or longer. Flowers insect-pollinated, narrowly campanulate-rotate, corolla pale flax creamy white to blusih-white, 18-25 mm diameter, 10-20 mm long, corolla tube 4 × 3 to 10 × 6 mm, lobes 6 × 3 to 12 × 5 mm; style equal in length to corolla tube, lobes 2 or 3. Calyx lobes less than ¼ corolla length, toothed and recurved in mature capsules; capsule domed cylindric, 6-8 × 4 mm. Seeds 0.5 mm long, ellipsoid, smooth, glossy brown when mature.

SIMILAR TAXA
Similar to subsp. albomarginata, from which it differs by the prostrate leaves which are ovate to orbicular-spathulate, sometimes tufted along the elongating ascending stems in shade forms; and by the usually entire leaf margins, (except in deep shade when they may become dentate); larger creamy white to bluish white flowers; which when fresh are 18-25 mm rather than 10-20 mm diameter.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Eastern Marlborough (coastal south of Cape Campbell to just south of Kaikoura Peninsula, and inland from the coast to the Clarence Fault))

HABITAT
Mostly coastal, but extending into montane areas up the Clarence River. Common on beach gravel and limestone outcrops, bluffs and hillslopes

THREATS
A naturally uncommon, narrow range endemic that is sparsely distributed over a wide area eastern Marlborough. Although not considered threatened, some populations suffer from browsing caused by sheep, goats, rabbits hares and other livestock.

GENUS
Wahlenbergia

FAMILY
Campanulaceae

AUTHORITY
Wahlenbergia albomarginata subsp. flexilis (Petrie) J.A.Petterson

SYNONYMS
Wahlenbergia flexilis Petrie, Wahlenbergia simpsonii J.A.Hay

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
November – April

FRUITING
December - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from tip cuttings and the division of whole plants. Fresh seed germinates readily. Being insect-pollinated and having an indigenous pollinator, cultivated plants rarely set seed.

ETYMOLOGY
wahlenbergia: Named in honour of Wahlenberg, a Swedish botanist and author of A Botany of Lapland.
albomarginata: From the Latin albus 'white' and marginatus 'having a border or margin' meaning something with a white margin, often referring to leaves

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 36

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp
2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon
2004 | Range Restricted
Jump to current conservation status

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Petterson, J.A. 1997: Revision of the genus *Wahlenbergia* (Campanulaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botanv 35*: 9-54.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange 12 June 2007. Description adapted from Petterson (1997).

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wahlenbergia-albomarginata-subsp-flexilis/

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