

Wahlenbergia albomarginata subsp. laxa

COMMON NAME

New Zealand harebell, harebell

SYNONYMS

Wahlenbergia laxa G.Simpson, Wahlenbergia pygmaea var. laxa (G.Simpson) Allan

FAMILY

Campanulaceae

AUTHORITY

Wahlenbergia albomarginata subsp. laxa (Simpson) J.A.Petterson

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

WAHLAX

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South (in wetter areas west of the Main Divide from the North-west Nelson and the Richond Range to Fiordland) and Stewart Island.

HABITAT

Montane to alpine (coastal on Stewart Island). Mountain valleys, lake shores, and herbfield



FEATURES

Perennial herb with radical, rosulate tufts of leaves, sometimes alternate on elongated stems (shade form). Leaves dark green, yellow-green to red green (not drying glaucous), more or less petiolate, dentate to serrate, lamina 10 × 2 to 40 × 10 mm, obovate to oblanceolate, marginal teeth conspicuous, gradually narrowed to petiole as long as the lamina or longer. Flowers insect-pollinated, narrowly campanulate-rotate, corolla pale flax blue to pale blue-violet, often with white zoning and deeper coloured veins, or all white, 10-25 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; capsule domed cylindric, 6-8 × 4 mm. Seeds 0.5 mm long, ellipsoid, smooth, glossy brown when mature.

SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to subsp. *albomarginata* from which it is distinguished by the obovate to oblanceolate, dentate to serrate, conspicuously toothed leaves, which do not dry glaucous. Flowering material is similar to subsp. *albomarginata* except that the flowers are said to be larger and have longer tubes and calyx lobes. The distinctions between subsp. *albomarginata* and subsp. *laxa* appear trivial and formal recognition of subsp. *laxa* seems questionable, requiring further critical study.

FLOWERING

November – April

FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, Violet/Purple

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

laxa: Slack, loose

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wahlenbergia-albomarginata-subsp-laxa/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wahlenbergia-albomarginata-subsp-laxa/>