

Wahlenbergia pygmaea subsp. pygmaea

COMMON NAME

North Island harebell

SYNONYMS

Wahlenbergia pygmaea Colenso; Wahlenbergia pygmaea subsp. tararua J.A.Petterson

FAMILY

Campanulaceae

AUTHORITY

Wahlenbergia pygmaea Colenso subsp. pygmaea

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (main axial ranges from the Huiarau to Tararua Ranges and adjacent Volcanic Peaks (except Mt Taranaki).

HABITAT

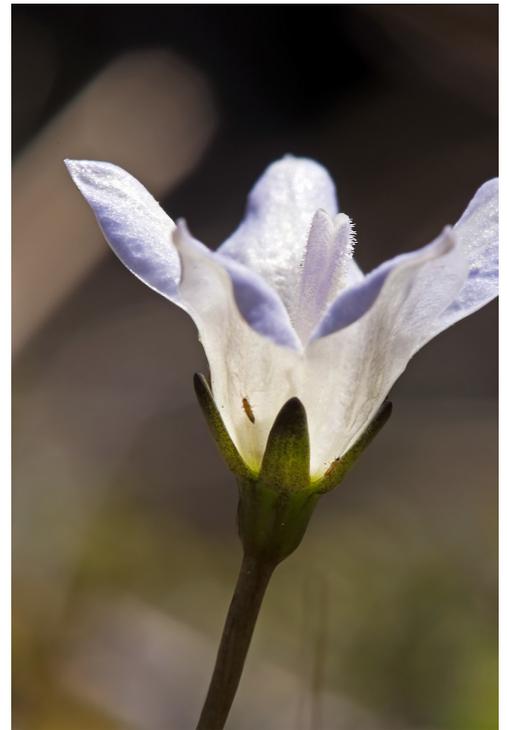
Montane to alpine. Common in herbfield, tussock-grassland, on lava fields, and rocks. Usually above the forest line but extending down rivers.

FEATURES

Perennial rhizomatous herb with rosulate tufts of leaves at ground level. Leaves bright green, glossy, glabrous or with a few scattered hairs, petiolate; lamina spatulate, 10 × 3 to 20 × 5 mm, 2 mm wide. Leaf margins sparsely toothed, usually red-tinged. Flowers usually insect-pollinated, some forms self-fertile; erect or nodding on short upright scapes, 40–100 mm tall, which may be naked or 1–2-bracted. Corolla soft blue, or blue and white; up to 30 mm diameter, up to 18 mm long, broadly campanulate with tube as broad as or broader than long, lobes c.9 × 7 mm, spreading, broadly elliptic-lanceolate, acute. Calyx lobes c.3.0 × 1.5 mm, glabrous, narrow-triangular. Capsule c.10 × 6 mm, glabrous, domed cylindrical to plump barrel-shaped. Seeds ellipsoid, glossy brown.



Mangatepopo, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Desert Road. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

SIMILAR TAXA

Differs from subsp. *drucei* by its geographic isolation; by its spatulate leaves whose leaf margins are sparsely toothed and often red-tinged; and by the flowers which are soft blue, white or blue and white

FLOWERING

December – May

FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, White

FRUITING

January - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from tip cuttings and the division of whole plants. Fresh seed germinates readily.

ETYMOLOGY

wahlenbergia: Named in honour of Wahlenberg, a Swedish botanist and author of *A Botany of Lapland*.

pygmaea: Tiny

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Wahlenbergia pygmaea seems only doubtfully distinct from the earlier named South Island endemic *W. albomarginata*, and many botanists regard them as conspecific. This requires further study. In the interim *Wahlenbergia pygmaea* subsp. *tararua* is here treated as part of *W. pygmaea* subsp. *pygmaea* because the morphological distinctions attributed to it by Petterson (1997) are variable and fall within the range of variation seen in *W. pygmaea* subsp. *pygmaea* north of the Tararua Ranges.

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-pygmaea-subsp-pygmaea/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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