

Gunnera arenaria

COMMON NAMES

sand gunnera

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Gunneraceae

AUTHORITY

Gunnera arenaria Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

GUNARE

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 34

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: CD, DP, RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Gradual Decline

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, South Island and Stewart Island/Rakiura from the Pouto Peninsula south and mainly westerly in its distribution. Occurring locally throughout.

HABITAT

A coastal species of damp sand ground, dune slacks and swales, and along tidal river margins. It also grows on coastal sandstone bluffs in some parts of the country.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low growing herb, mat forming. **Stolons** rather stout, usually creeping through sand, branched, up to approximately 40 cm. long. **Leaves** on stout, more or less flat, amplexicaul petioles up to 5 cm. long; lamina rather diversely shaped (on same plant) oblong to ovate to sub-rhombic, cuneate to subcordate at base, subcoriaceous, grey-green, 7–12–(20) × 9–15 mm., subglabrous, coarsely crenate, sometimes lobed. **Inflorescence** up to 7 cm. long, flowers sessile. **Staminate flower** with filiform calyx-lobes, minute bracts; petals 2, about lanceolate, glabrous, more or less 2 mm. long; filaments obsolete. **Pistillate flowers** with triangular calyx-lobes more or less 6 mm. long; styles filiform, up to 5 mm. long. **Drupes** clavate to obconic, patent to pendulous, more or less apiculate, on elongated scapes, yellow to pale red, more or less 4–6 mm long.



Leaves and flowers, Farewell Spit Nature Reserve. Photographer: Simon Walls, Date taken: 01/11/2008, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Cabbage Tree Flat, Farewell Spit Nature Reserve, Sept, 2011. Photographer: Simon Walls, Date taken: 01/09/2011, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FLOWERING

November–March

FRUITING

November–May

THREATS

At risk from coastal development, wetland drainage and the spread of invasive weeds. Some populations have been destroyed by coastal erosion.

ETYMOLOGY

gunnera: Named after Bishop Gunner, a Swedish botanist

arenaria: Sand dweller

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Allan (1961).

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REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsidea, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/gunnera-arenaria/>

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17 September 2024