

# Wahlenbergia cartilaginea

## COMMON NAMES

scree harebell

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A perennial deep-rooting rhizomatous scree plant with distant rosettes of very thick, glaucous, (sometimes yellowish) sessile leaves, glabrous or pubescent. Leaves 8 × 5-25 × 15 mm, spatulate, obtuse, narrowed to a thick flat petiole; margins entire, thickened, cartilaginous. Scapes 20-30 mm long, stout, glaucous, with 1-3 small bracts, usually simple and stiff. Flower insect-pollinated, c.12 mm long, 8-12 mm diameter, lilac or white, scented. Corolla broadly funnel-shaped, 5-partite, tube c.5 × 6 mm, lobes c. 7 × 5 mm, enclosed within the large calyx lobes which are thick and coriaceous, glabrous, linear-oblong, obtuse, 6 × 2 to 10 × 3 mm. Capsule glabrous, often glaucous, globose to broadly turbinate, c.8 × 8 to 10 × 10 mm. Seeds larger than in other species, 1 mm long, ellipsoid, glossy brown when mature.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Easily separated from other *Wahlenbergia* Roth by its restriction to mobile scree habitats; its thick greyish or yellowish leaves borne in widely spaced, separate rosettes; short thick flower stems, calyx lobes about as long as the corolla, and by its fragrant insect-pollinated flowers.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Inland Kaikoura and Amuri Ranges from Mt Tapuaenuku to Mt Terako and Mt Percival, and drainage areas of upper Wairau, Waiau, Clarence, and Awatere Rivers)

## HABITAT

Mostly subalpine to alpine (rarely within montane areas on shingle beds and slips along riversides). Endemic to deep fine greywacke screes and semi-consolidated debris slopes.

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## THREATS

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

## DETAILED TAXONOMY

## FAMILY

Campanulaceae



Island Saddle. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 28/01/2018, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.



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## AUTHORITY

Wahlenbergia cartilaginea Hook.f.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## ECOLOGY

## FLOWERING

December - January

## FRUITING

January - March

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Can be grown in a rockery or an alpine house but generally regarded as difficult. Best from fresh seed.

## OTHER INFORMATION

## ETYMOLOGY

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

**cartilaginea**: Like cartilage

## NVS CODE

WAHCAR

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

### 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.

### ATTRIBUTION

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

### NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Wahlenbergia cartilaginea* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

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

### MORE INFORMATION

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

### PDF DATE

12 March 2025