

Cardamine bilobata

COMMON NAME

native bittercress

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Brassicaceae

AUTHORITY

Cardamine bilobata Kirk

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

CARBIL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 48

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, DP

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Data Deficient

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (North-west Nelson and east of the main divide).

HABITAT

Mainly low alpine 900–1500m elevation. Usually in fellfield, on moraine or scree edges, or rock crevices, also damp places in tussock grassland.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing herb with single rosettes or in small clumps. **Leaves** deeply three lobed, sometimes with additional pair of leaflets; dull green to purplish, thin, fleshy, hairless. **Flower stems** sparsely branched, hairless, up to 30 cm tall. **Flowers** large, white, about 8 mm across, 4-petalled with 6 stamens. **Seeds** up to 1mm long, pale brown, oblong, in slender linear pods up to 2.5 cm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Cardamine corymbosa Hook.f., and *C. aff. bilobata*. From *C. corymbosa* it differs by its larger fruits, and three lobed leaves. *C. aff. bilobata* differs by its entire, unlobed leaves.

FLOWERING

January–February



On limestone. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 26/02/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.



On limestone. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 26/02/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

January–February

LIFE CYCLE

Seeds are dispersed by ballistic projection, water and attachment (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed.

THREATS

Based on herbarium evidence it would seem that the species was more widespread and common than it is now. Being a cress, it is highly palatable, and it may have declined as a result of browsing pressure. The species is also considered to be quite elusive (P.B. Heenan pers. comm.) and is rarely seen even in apparently suitable habitat.

ETYMOLOGY

cardamine: From the Greek name kárdamon, referring to an Indian spice

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cardamine-bilobata/>