

Callitriche muelleri

COMMON NAMES

Mueller's starwort

BIOSTATUS

Native

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Short-lived perennial to annual herb forming matted patches. Stems filiform, much-branched, up to 200 mm long when submerged usually much less above water. Leaves on filiform petioles up to 3 mm long; lamina 2-5 x 1-5 mm, bright green, rhomboid to suborbicular, membranous, apex acute, cuneately narrowed to base, margins usually with 1-2 prominent teeth. Flowers in axils, with male and females together or solitary; shortly pedunculate, ebracteate; stamens and styles very short. mericarp obovate, laterally compressed, 1.0-1.3 mm long; surfaces dull, reticulate or with a raised central part in each cell, body red-brown, dark red-brown or dark brown or light brown to grey-brown, with a pale orange-yellow to light orange-yellow wing.

SIMILAR TAXA

Not easily confused with other indigenous or naturalised species of *Callitriche*. The rhomboidal toothed leaves in particular readily distinguish this species from the others.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. In New Zealand known from the Kermadec, Three Kings, North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands. Also in Australia.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane in damp, muddy ground or in shallow seasonal pools, along lake and stream sides. Often in dense forest.

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

DETAILED TAXONOMY

FAMILY

Plantaginaceae

AUTHORITY

Callitriche muelleri Sond.

SYNONYMS

Callitriche macropteryx Hegelm., *Callitriche microphylla* Colenso

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No



Coromandel, November. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Callitriche muelleri, Auckland Zoo (wild).
Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Date taken: 25/02/2007, Licence: CC BY-NC.

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

ECOLOGY

FLOWERING

October - December

FRUITING

November - March

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Mericarps possibly by water and attachment (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces and seed. Can become invasive but makes a pleasant ground cover in shaded, poorly drained soils.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

OTHER INFORMATION

ETYMOLOGY

callitriche: From the Greek kalli 'beautiful' and thrix 'hair', referring to the beautiful stems

muelleri: Named after Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, 19th century German/Australian botanist and founder of the National Herbarium of Victoria

NVS CODE

CALMUE

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 10

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Thorsen, M.J.; Dickinson, K.J.M.; Seddon, P.J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11(4): 285-309.

ATTRIBUTION

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

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): Callitriche muelleri Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/callitriche-muelleri/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/callitriche-muelleri/>

PDF DATE

11 March 2025