

Convolvulus waitaha

COMMON NAME

grass convolvulus

SYNONYMS

Convolvulus verecundus subsp. *waitaha* Sykes

FAMILY

Convolvulaceae

AUTHORITY

Convolvulus waitaha (Sykes) Heenan, Molloy et de Lange

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

CONWAI

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 22

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Easterly in the North Island and South Island. In the North Island known from an old record from the Hawke's Bay, otherwise from Cape Palliser west to Tongue Point. In the South Island it occurs from Marlborough south to Otago.

HABITAT

Coastal to lowland (1 - 500 m a.s.l.), almost, but not strictly coastal. A species of short tussock grassland, introduced lightly browsed pastures, boulder banks, talus slopes and amongst fine gravel. It frequently grows with and tolerates introduced grasses and herbs.



Flowering plants at Otematata Station, upper Waitaki. Photographer: David A. Norton, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Godley Head, Port Hills, Christchurch. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 21/09/2014, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rhizomatous, lianoid, decumbent, spreading perennial herb. Stems, spreading, often ascending, up to 800 mm long, sparse to densely covered in retrorse hairs. Leaves in rosettes and alternate on stems 6-17 x 5-12 mm, deltoid, deltoid-ovate, to broad-oblong, green; glabrous or with scattered hairs near lamina/petiole junction, margins entire to undulate, irregularly lobed, base truncate, rarely oblique; apex retuse rarely obtuse to subacute. Pedicel 8-18 mm long, sparsely hairy. Sepals 3.6-4 x 2.1-2.6 mm, obovate to ovate, green both surfaces glabrous. Corolla 10-16 mm wide when open, white, comprising five fused lobes, mid-petalline band green. Capsule 5-6 x 5-6.5 mm, papery, globose, with 2-4 seeds. Seeds broadly obovate 3.1-3.9 x 2.3-3.3 mm, brown, with grey nut-brown. Surface covered in distinct but irregular ridges and tubercles.

SIMILAR TAXA

Convolvulus verecundus Allan and *C. fracto-saxosa* Petrie, from which it is distinguished by longer lianoid stems (up to 800 mm); usually glabrous, green leaves; corolla > 18 mm diam., when open; the pale green mid-petaline band; and by the seed coat being densely covered in distinct irregular tubercles and ridges.

FLOWERING

October - February

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

December - March

LIFE CYCLE

Seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. Plants grow best in well drained, fertile soils in full sun, and make an excellent pot plant. This species does not thrive in humid climates.

THREATS

Not Threatened, though it has declined from the North Island, and is now only known with certainty from the vicinity of Cape Palliser.

ETYMOLOGY

convolvulus: From Latin convolvere, which means to twine around

waitaha: Named for the location in Canterbury, from the Maori wai 'water' and taha 'to pass to one side', meaning a backwater.

ATTRIBUTION

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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Reed, A. W. 2002: *The Reed Dictionary of New Zealand Place Names*. Reed Publishing. Auckland.

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: 285-309.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/convolvulus-waitaha/>