

# Epilobium pubens

## COMMON NAMES

willowherb

## BIOSTATUS

Native

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect sparingly branched (up to 4 branches), slender perennial herb 150-700 mm tall; entire plant densely covered with erect glandular and eglandular hairs, the stems completely pubescent. Petiole 2-18 mm long, winged. Leaves opposite except in and near inflorescence where alternate; lateral veins prominent, 3-4 on each side of midrib; lamina 7-43 x 4-24 mm, dull green, narrowly obovate to broadly ovate, apex subacute to obtuse, base attenuate to rounded; margins serrulate, bearing 8-32 teeth. Inflorescence and flowers nodding. Pedicels 1-3 mm long. Ovaries 10-27 mm long, densely pubescent, with a fine covering of erect eglandular and glandular hairs. Floral tube 0.7-1.0 x 1.5-2.0 mm, internally glabrous or furnished with a few sparse hairs. Sepals 2.5-2.8 x 1.0-1.1 mm, not keeled, densely pubescent with mixtures of erect glandular/eglandular hairs. Petals 3.5-7.0 x 2.9-4.0 mm, white, notch 0.6-2.0 mm deep. Anthers 0.7-0.9 x 0.5-0.6 mm, yellow; filaments white, those of longer stamens 1.7-2.7 mm, shorter 0.8-1.2 mm. Style 2.0-2.8 mm, white, glabrous; stigma 1.5-2.6 x 0.6-0.8 mm, white, clavate. Capsule 2.9-5.3 mm long, densely covered with erect glandular and eglandular hairs; pedicel elongating to 15 mm long. Seeds 0.75-0.92 x 0.35-0.42 mm, dark brown, obovoid, papillose, coma 4-5 mm, detaching readily.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *Epilobium astonii* (Allan) Raven et Engelhorn from which it differs by its slender scarcely branched, rather than much larger, compact, bushy, growth habit; shorter sepals (2.5-2.8 cf. 5.0-6.5 mm) and petals (3.5-7.0 cf. 7.3-13.0 mm); and by being a much more widespread species, occupying varied substrates and habitats from the coast to upper montane forest and subalpine scrub, rather than being restricted to predominantly greywacke rock within the subalpine to alpine zone of the main axial ranges of the North Island.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Three Kings, North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands.

## HABITAT

Coastal to subalpine (1-1100 m a.s.l.) but mainly found in the coastal, lowland and lower montane zone. Favouring dry situations on rock outcrops, cliff faces, clay banks or similar semi-shaded to sunny habitats. Often under seral vegetation or under relatively open *Kunzea ericoides* (A.Rich.) Joy Thomps. s.l. dominated vegetation.



Dehiscent capsules and seeds. Remutaka Rail Trail. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 03/12/2006, Licence: CC BY.



Close up of stem showing complete covering of glandular pubescence. Remutaka Rail Trail. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 03/12/2006, Licence: CC BY.

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

## DETAILED TAXONOMY

### FAMILY

Onagraceae

### AUTHORITY

*Epilobium pubens* A.Rich.

### SYNONYMS

*Epilobium pubens* var. *strictum* Allan

### ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

### ENDEMIC GENUS

No

### ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## ECOLOGY

### FLOWERING

September - April

### FRUITING

October - June

### LIFE CYCLE

Minute papitate seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

### PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. Not particularly attractive and inclined to become invasive.

## OTHER INFORMATION

### WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

### ETYMOLOGY

**epilobium:** From the Greek epi- 'upon' and lobos 'a pod', the flowers appearing to be growing on the seed pod.

**pubens:** Downy

### NVS CODE

EIPUB

### CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 36$

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## REFERENCING AND CITATIONS

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Raven, P.H.; Raven, T.E. 1976: The genus *Epilobium* in Australasia. New Zealand DSIR Bulletin 216. Wellington, Government Printer.

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

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2011: *Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons*. Christchurch, Manuka Press.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 6 January 2008. Description adapted from Raven & Raven (1976) and Webb & Simpson (2001).

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/epilobium-pubens/>

## PDF DATE

03 October 2024