

Euphrasia monroi

COMMON NAMES

alpine eyebright

FAMILY

Orobanchaceae

AUTHORITY

Euphrasia monroi Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

EUPMON

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, Mountains of Nelson and Marlborough.

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Densely branched perennial herb or subshrub arising from stout woody stock up to 4 mm diameter; stems stout, woody in lower parts, not or hardly rooting, crowded, sometime branched in upper parts, usually naked below and densely leafy at tips, bifariously white-pubescent. Leaves sessile, usually close-set, spreading, 5-10 x 3-6 mm, obovate to obovate-cuneate with 1-2 pairs of usually shallow incisions near broad obtuse apex, glabrous, very cartilaginous and usually blackish when dry with glossy thickened margins. Flowers usually few in tight cluster at tips of branches, pedicels up to 4 mm long, usually hidden; occasionally inflorescence more elongated. Calyx 6-8 mm long, glabrous or nearly so, generally unevenly divided 1/3-1/2 way; lobes obtuse with thickened margins and midribs. Corolla white, 10-15 mm long; tube usually much longer than calyx and rather narrow; lobes of lower lip up to 6 mm wide, shallowly emarginate. Anthers golden brown to red-brown, marginal hairs numerous, awns stout, almost equal. Capsule more or less equal to calyx or occasionally exceeding it, broadly oblong, glabrous; seeds numerous, approximately 2 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to and closely related to *Euphrasia laingii* with which it sympatric, and from which it differs by its leaves being extremely cartilaginous when dry, leaves are cuneate to broad-obovate rather than narrow-cuneate to cuneate-oblong or -obovate in outline giving the plant a stouter appearance. The pedicels of *E. monroi* are usually congested and hidden (up to 4 mm long), compared to the longer (up to 10 mm long), more obvious pedicels of *E. laingii*.



Lake Tennyson, Canterbury. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 18/11/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.



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FLOWERING

(September-) October – February.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

December – March.

LIFE CYCLE

Seeds is dispersed by wind and possibly water and ballistic projection (Thorsen et al., 2009).

ETYMOLOGY

euphrasia: Eye-medicine

monroi: Named after Sir David Monro who was a 19th century New Zealand politician

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Plants from Mount Stokes usually referred to *E. monroi* are not quite typical, but usually have smaller leaves and sometimes elongated inflorescences.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by M.D. Ward (5 November 2020). Description adapted from Allan (1961).

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REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Volume 1. Wellington: Government Printer. Page 852.

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

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/euphrasia-monroi/>

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