

Gaultheria depressa var. novae-zealandiae

COMMON NAMES

snowberry

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing shrub bearing oval leathery leaves that have small hairs on the wavy margin when young. Twigs with dark bristly hairs. Leaves 5-8mm long by 3-4mm wide. Flowers white, bell-shaped, solitary at base of leaf. Fruit white to red, 8-10mm wide, lobed.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

GENUS

Gaultheria

FAMILY

Ericaceae

AUTHORITY

Gaultheria depressa var. *novae-zealandiae* D.A.Franklin

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Fleshy berries are dispersed by invertebrate frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

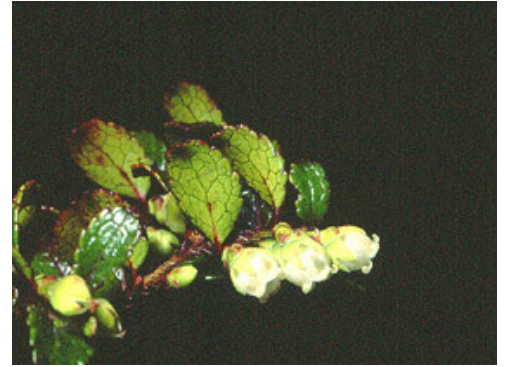
WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

PLANT OF THE MONTH

This plant has been featured as a Plant of the Month – see [Trilepidea: NZPCN newsletter for December 2014](#) for the full story.



Upper Clarence, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mt Technical, Canterbury (white fruit).
Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Licence: CC BY-NC.

ETYMOLOGY

gaultheria: Named after Jean François Gaultier of Quebec (6 Oct 1708-10 July 1756) by the Scandinavian Pehr Kalm in 1748.

depressa: From the Latin depremere 'to press down', meaning to be flattened vertically, often referring to a plant's habit

novae-zealandiae: Of New Zealand

NVS CODE

GAUDVN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 22

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened [Help](#)

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

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: 285-309

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/gaultheria-depressa-var-novae-zealandiae/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026