

# Ageratum houstonianum

## COMMON NAME

Blue billy goat weed

## FAMILY

Asteraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Ageratum houstonianum* Mill.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

## CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

## HABITAT

Terrestrial. Prefers open sunny spots along forest edges.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect or ascending annual herb, up to 1 m tall somewhat woody toward base. Leaves on a short petiole up to 20 mm long. Leaves hairy and glandular especially on lower surface, ovate with crenate-serrate margins up to about 50 x 60 mm. Blue flowers in dense clusters. Seeds sparsely hairy, black up to 1.8 mm long.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Is distinctive within the Asteraceae due to the blue flowers, and petiolate, hairy leaves with toothed margins.

## FLOWERING

January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December

## FLOWER COLOURS

Blue

## LIFE CYCLE

Annual. Produces small dry seed, sparsely hairy at one end. Dispersed by people and the wind.

## YEAR NATURALISED

1888

## ORIGIN

Mexico, C. and tropical America

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Ornamental

## ETYMOLOGY

**ageratum:** From the Greek a- 'without' and geras 'old', meaning not aging, possibly referring to the fact that the flowers do not wither readily

**houstonianum:** Named after the genus *Houstonia*, which is named after the English botanist Dr William Houston.

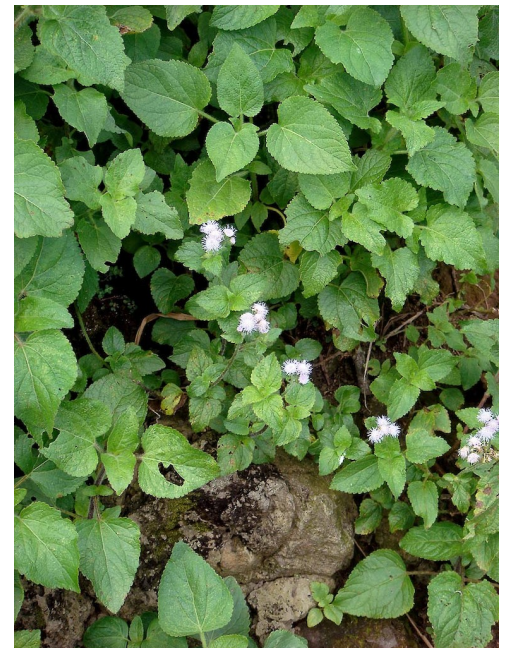
## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Johnson, A. T. and Smith, H. A (1986). *Plant Names Simplified: Their pronunciation, derivation and meaning.* Landsman Bookshop Ltd: Buckenhill, UK.



*Ageratum houstonianum* in flower (wild plant), Dover Road, St Andrews, Hamilton.

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South Meyer Island, Kermadec Islands. May 2011. Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.

**MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ageratum-houstonianum/>