

Colobanthus hookeri

COMMON NAME

Hooker's colobanthus

SYNONYMS

Colobanthus benthamianus Cheeseman; had also been confused with *Colobanthus subulatus* Hook. f.

FAMILY

Caryophyllaceae

AUTHORITY

Colobanthus hookeri Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

COLHOO

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku.

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine, usually on bare or sparsely vegetated rock.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Plant forming compact cushion 20–50 mm diameter, branches many and close, 20–30 mm long, leafy throughout. **Leaves** closely imbricated, incurved towards stem, rigid and shining; sheaths mostly hidden; blades 4–5 mm long, subulate, tapering from base to short acicular tip; border and midrib distinguishable in very young leaves when dry. **Peduncles** about = leaves. **Flowers** 3.0–3.5 mm long; sepals usually 5, broader than leaves, ovate-subulate, pouched at base, tapering to very short acicular tip, midrib forming flattish keel; capsule lobes about = sepals.

FLOWERING

December



Auckland Island tops, above 300 m elevation, January 2023, Strannik Auckland Island Expedition. Photographer: Alex Fergus, Date taken: 31/01/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Auckland Island tops, above 300 m elevation, January 2023, Strannik Auckland Island Expedition. Photographer: Alex Fergus, Date taken: 23/01/2023, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FRUITING

January

LIFE CYCLE

Winged seeds are dispersed by water and possibly also wind and ballistic projection (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Unknown in cultivation.

THREATS

A Naturally Uncommon, range-restricted species. There are no known threats. Both the Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku are Nature Reserves and part of a World Heritage Park. All access is strictly controlled by the New Zealand Department of Conservation.

ETYMOLOGY

colobanthus: Mutilated flower with no petals

hookeri: Named after Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker (born 1817) - a world famous botanist who travelled on the Antarctic expedition of 1839 under the command of Sir James Ross and wrote "Handbook of New Zealand Flora" published in 1864-67 describing many specimens sent to Kew by collectors. He died in 1911 and has a memorial stone at Westminster Abbey London.

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from: Allan, H.H. (1961).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsida, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285-309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/colobanthus-hookeri/>