

Epilobium pictum

COMMON NAME

grassland willow herb

SYNONYMS

Epilobium haloragifolium sensu Kirk

FAMILY

Onagraceae

AUTHORITY

Epilobium pictum Petrie

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

EPIPIC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 36$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

2004 | Data Deficient

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to the eastern side of the South Island of New Zealand.

HABITAT

An uncommon, sparsely distributed species of bush margins and tussock grassland. Usually found near rock overhangs, or in semi-shaded sites.



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Habitat. Photographer: Cathy Jones, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Gracile, perennial herb up to 400 × 400 mm. Stems numerous, arising from a open, loosely rhizomatous root crown; stems up to 400 mm long, densely invested in ± appressed hairs, with the hairs of the inflorescence grey-strigulose. Leaves opposite, except near inflorescence where alternate, upper surface grey-green or light green with darker bluish green to dark green mottling, undersides usually reddish, petiole, leaf margins and undersides strigulose, 8.0-22.0 × 2.5-6.0 mm, narrow elliptic to elliptic, base narrowly cuneate, apex acute, margins coarsely serrate, teeth 3-6 on each side; lateral veins 2-4 each side of midrib, inconspicuous,. Inflorescence drooping bud. Flowers erect up to 9 mm diameter. Pedicel 0-3 mm long. Ovaries 7-10 mm long, grey-pubescent. Sepals not keeled, 1.8-2.3 × 0.9-1.1 mm, grey-pubescent or glabrate. Floral tube 0.6-0.9 mm deep. 1.6-1.8 mm diameter at apex, internally bearing a conspicuous ring of long white hairs. Petals white, 2.8-4.5 × 1.5-3.4 mm wide, notched, notch 0.6-0.9 mm deep. Stamens 8, of two lengths, 4 longer (1.7-2.1 mm) and 4 shorter (1.0-1.3 mm); anthers 0.5-0.7 × 0.4-0.5 mm, yellow. Style 1.2-2.0 mm long, white; stigma clavate, 1.0-1.9 × 0.4-0.5 mm. Capsules on pedicels 0.2-7.0 mm long; narrowly cylindrical, 20-25 mm long, grey-pubescent. Seeds 0.9-1.1 × 0.3-0.4 mm, brown, obovoid, papillose; coma easily detached, 5-8 mm long, white.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily distinguished from other willow herbs by the loosely rhizomatous, spreading growth habit, finely, densely pubescent stems, petioles, leaf margins and undersides, light green, distinctly mottled with dark green leaves, and flowers which are nodding in bud, erect when open.

FLOWERING

December - April

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

January to July

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from seed and rooted pieces of stem.

THREATS

Evidently a naturally uncommon, sparsely distributed species which is now threatened at most sites by habitat loss and competition from weeds. Recent surveys suggest it has gone extinct at many sites where it had been recorded 20-30 years ago.

ETYMOLOGY

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

pictum: Painted, variegated

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available.

ATTRIBUTION

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

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.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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