

# Epilobium wilsonii

## COMMON NAME

Wilson's willowherb

## SYNONYMS

*Epilobium chlorifolium* var. *kaikourense* Cockayne, *Epilobium wilsonii* var. *pallidum* G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson

## FAMILY

Onagraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Epilobium wilsonii* Cheeseman

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

EPIWIL

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, RR, Sp

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, eastern Marlborough (from near Lake Grassmere to Mt Fyffe and the Kaikoura Peninsula) and north Canterbury (Waikari River, Mt Terako and Motunau Beach). Also on the Owen Range, Kahurangi National Park, north west Nelson

## HABITAT

Coastal to alpine (0-1200 m a.s.l.) on calcareous rocks in open shrubland, grassland or rock field



## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Clump forming perennial herb of calcareous rocks. Branching freely from base and also above; stems 60-300 mm tall, wiry and pliant; usually purplish sometimes green with broad lines of non glandular appressed or erect hairs running down from the margins of the petioles, pubescent otherwise and this increasing and including larger numbers of glandular hairs within the inflorescence. Leaves opposite, alternate in inflorescence, coriaceous; petiole 1-3 mm long; leaf lamina 10-40 x 6-20 mm, dull grey green to green, ovate to broadly ovate, apex acute, base attenuate to rounded, margins serrulate (bearing 4-8 teeth) or entire; lateral veins obscure. Inflorescence and flowers erect to nodding. Ovaries 10-24 mm long, sparsely pubescent or covered with erect non glandular hairs, sometimes glabrous, sessile or on pedicels up to 4 mm long. Floral tube 1.8-2.5 x 2.0-3.0 mm. Sepals keeled, 5.0-10.5 x 1.5-3.0 mm, sparsely glandular-pubescent or bearing erect non-glandular hairs. Petals 10-18 x 6-15 mm, white or pink, notch 3-5 mm deep. Anthers 1.6-2.2 x 0.6-1.0 mm, yellow; filaments of the longer stamens 1.5-8.0 mm long, those of shorter 0.9-5.5 mm long. Style 4.5-14.0 mm, white; stigma 2.2-3.8 x 1.2-2.0 mm, white, capitate to short-capitate. Capsule 19-55 mm long on pedicels 7-15 mm long; surface glandular-pubescent or bearing erect non-glandular hairs, occasionally glabrous. Seeds 1.4-2.2 x 0.5-0.6 mm, brown, narrowly obovoid, finely papillose; coma 5-6 mm long, detaching readily or persistent.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from other indigenous epilobia by the thick, coriaceous, often entire, ovate leaves, wiry stems; flowers with white to pink-flushed petals, and by the sepals which are 5.0-10.5 mm long. It is one of only a few species endemic to calcareous substrates.

## FLOWERING

November - April

## FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

## FRUITING

November - June

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. Does well in a free draining soil in full sun. Inclined to become weedy.

## THREATS

Not threatened. Listed because it has a rather localised distribution centred on the limestone country of eastern Marlborough and north Canterbury. However, its disjunct occurrence on the Owen massif, north west Nelson, and diffuse distribution within Marlborough and Canterbury suggests that it would be better ranked as Sparse.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

## 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**

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(Date website was queried)

### **MORE INFORMATION**

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