

# Gentianella patula

## COMMON NAME

gentian

## SYNONYMS

*Gentiana patula* (Kirk) Cheeseman, *Chionogentias patula* (Kirk) L.G.Adams

## FAMILY

Gentianaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Gentianella patula* (Kirk) Holub

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

GENPAT

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Nelson, Marlborough and Canterbury)

## HABITAT

Subalpine or montane in Valley floor and high alpine tussock and other grasslands, in herbfields, on alluvial fans, and along the margins of subalpine scrub margins



Cobb Valley. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 17/03/2016, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Plants biennial and monocarpic, or polycarpic, height in flower 60–370 mm. Root 2.7–6.3 mm diameter at stem base. Caudex unbranched or branched, 25–70 mm long; stolons absent. Flowering stems terminal and lateral, 1–36 per plant, largest flowering stem 1.1–3.6 mm diameter at base, tinted crimson to purple-black, lateral flowering stems decumbent or erect, flowering stem leaves 3–5 pairs per stem, lowest pedicels from near apex of flowering stem. Rosette of leaves distinct from flowering stem leaves, leaves elliptic, 18–44 × 3.5–9.0 mm, green, flat or V-shaped, recurved or not; leaf apex acute; petiole distinct, 10–29 mm long, 1.5–2.5 mm wide at leaf base. Flowering stem leaves ovate, apex acute, base clasping, V-shaped strongly. Pedicels 1 or 2 per leaf axil, 9–35 mm long, 0.8–1.0 mm diameter. Flowers (3–)40–86(–126) per plant, 10–15 mm long. Calyx 5.1–8.5 mm long, green or green tinted purple-black, hairs at calyx–corolla fusion line present; lobes 3.4–6.0 mm long, 1.8–2.6 mm wide at base, plane, apices acute, margins smooth, sinus hairs sparse. Corolla 5.9–16 mm long, white or tinted pink or purple, veins uncoloured or purple; tube 3.0–3.5 mm long; lobes 9.0–11.4 × 5.5–8.0 mm, hairs below sinus present; nectary 0.3–0.8 mm from corolla base. Filaments 4.5–8.8 mm long from corolla base, 0.7–1.0 mm wide. Anthers 1.7–2.4 mm long, anther wall blue-black, mouth yellow or orange-red, extrorse at anthesis or horizontal at anthesis. Stigma colourless or grey-violet. Ovules 24–44 per ovary. Capsule 12–15 mm long.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Most closely related to *Gentianella montana* from which it is distinguished smaller overall stature; larger number of flowering stems, yet smaller flowers. Most *G. montana* populations have white flowers without coloured veins, whereas high elevation populations of *G. patula* have white flowers, lower elevation populations flowers with coloured corolla veins

## FLOWERING

December – May

## FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

## FRUITING

February - June

## LIFE CYCLE

Seeds dispersed by ballistic projection, wind and water (Thorsen et al., 2009)

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild

## ETYMOLOGY

**gentianella**: Little *Gentiana* (named after Gentius, 6th century king of Illyria, who found the roots of the yellow gentian to have a healing effect on his malaria-stricken troops)

**patula**: Spreading

## WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet for NZPCN prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2004). Description modified from Glenny (2004)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Glenny, D. 2004: A revision of the genus *Gentianella* in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 361-530.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/gentianella-patula/>