

Geranium cruentum

SYNONYMS

Previously known as *Geranium* sp. "Von".

FAMILY

Geraniaceae

AUTHORITY

Heenan et G.M.Rogers

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Indeterminate

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

Chromosome number: $n = 26II$, $2n = 52$ (AK 315844/CHR 554036).

INTERIM CONSERVATION STATUS

2021 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Interim | Heenan & Rogers (2021)

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, EW

DISTRIBUTION

South Island: Southland. Known from a single collection that was unknowingly made in the Von River valley, Southland.

Repeated surveys of the area of the original collection at Von River valley have not located any additional wild plants, but other nearby areas should perhaps be searched (e.g. Livingstone Mountains).

HABITAT

The habitat is not known with certainty, but it may occur in the wetlands associated with the three lakes and kettleholes at the site of the original collection.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

For a full description of this species see [Heenan & Rogers \(2021\)](#).

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar growth habit to *G. brevicaule* and *G. socolateum* but distinct from all New Zealand *Geranium* by the distinctive leaf shape and colour; the dark green with prominent, irregularly-shaped, reddish-purple brown, blood-like blotches in each sinus of the primary and secondary lobes, such blotches are unique to *G. cruentum* among New Zealand indigenous *Geranium*. Another feature is the leaf hairs of *G. cruentum*, which have a distinct bulbous base raised above the leaf surface. The leaf hair bases in *G. brevicaule* and *G. socolateum* are not bulbous and not raised prominently above the leaf surface.

Putative natural hybrids have been found between in the wild of *G. brevicaule* and *G. cruentum* (CHR 589937).

ETYMOLOGY

geranium: From the Greek *geranos* 'crane', the fruit of the plant resembling the head and beak of this bird, hence the common name cranesbill.

cruentum: Adjective derived from the Latin *cruor* 'blood', refers to the red blotches or 'blood spattered' appearance.



During the period 26 February to 8 March 1993, A.P. Druce led a collecting trip to Southland where a team of botanists visited the Mavora Lakes, Von River valley, West Dome and Thomson Mountains. Field trips on 1, 3 and 5 March were made to three lakes and associated kettleholes and wetlands in the Von River valley. In regard to the visit to the three lakes, H. Druce wrote that “Tony spent a lot of time there and was using his pocket-knife to cut out plants for study & growing Back at Pinehaven, Tony was attending to his plants shaking off the soil for the ones to be pressed, when he noticed a small piece of white root, unconnected. He potted it up & some time later up came *Geranium* ‘Von’”.

In February 2017 Geoff Rogers, Jesse Bythell and Brian Rance returned to the North Von Valley and spent 3 days searching a range of habitats for the elusive *Geranium* sp. ‘Von’ to no avail, though many other magnificent plants were found.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (14 December 2022). Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, Features, and Similar taxa sections copied from Heenan & Rogers (2021).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan PB, Rogers GM. 2021. Recognition of *Geranium cruentum* sp. nov. (Geraniaceae) resolves a taxonomic conundrum in New Zealand cranesbills. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 59(3): 397–408.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.2020.1867199>

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/geranium-cruentum/>