

# Lobelia ionantha

## COMMON NAME

hypsele

## SYNONYMS

*Hypsela rivalis* E.Wimm.; *Isotoma rivalis* (E.Wimm.) Lammers

## FAMILY

Campanulaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Lobelia ionantha* Heenan

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

LOBION

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 14

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

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

## HABITAT

Lowland to subalpine. A species of the margins of lake, tarn and ephemeral wetlands, stream banks, and seepages in tussock grassland, where it grows with other short turf and small herb species.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).



*Hypsela rivalis*, Ahuriri Valley. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.



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## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Creeping, prostrate, usually glabrous herb; rooting at leaf nodes. Leaves alternate, upright to spreading; lamina 3.0–9.0 × 2.0–7.0 mm, green, usually blotched purple-brown, orbicular, suborbicular, to broadly elliptic, often oblanceolate and oblong in shade glabrous to rarely hairy, hairs when present < 0.2 mm long and patent, midvein faint, lateral veins faint to obscure, margin with 5–7 prominent denticles or shallow teeth, apex obtuse to subacute; petiole 0.5–1.5 × 0.2–0.5 mm. Flowers hermaphrodite, axillary, solitary; peduncle 0.5–27.0 mm long, 0.4–0.6 mm wide, usually glabrous. Calyx with short tube adnate to ovary; lobes 5, 1.3–2.8 × 0.4–0.8 mm, green, narrow triangular to lanceolate, abaxial surface usually glabrous hairy, adaxial surface glabrous or occasionally sparsely hairy near apex; apex subacute and with conspicuous usually translucent tip. Corolla 8.0–12.0 mm diam. when open, white to pale blue, two green or yellow-green markings between the sinus of the front three corolla lobes, with conspicuous purple-violet blotches at the base of the three front corolla lobes; tube 3.5–6.0 mm long, 1.0–2.0 mm wide, fused, abaxial surface glabrous to sparsely hairy, adaxial surface sometimes sparsely hairy; lobes 5, 4.0–6.0 × 1.2–2.4 mm, narrow-lanceolate, recurved, abaxial surface glabrous to rarely sparsely hairy, abaxial surface glabrous, apex subacute. Filaments 4.0–7.5 mm long, 0.2–0.3 mm wide, fused below anthers, adnate from base to upper half of the corolla tube, white occasionally flushed pale blue in distal part, becoming translucent and flushed green toward proximal part. Anthers 1.2–1.6 mm long, united into a tube around style, purple-brown, curved over at top, with small central pore < 0.1 mm diam.; 2 awns and several hairs present at apex on lower anthers, awns 0.2–0.4 mm long, hairs < 0.2 mm long. Ovary 1.5–2.5 × 1.1–1.4 mm, green, glabrous to moderately hairy, apex obtuse. Style 5.0–8.0 mm long, 0.2–0.5 mm wide, white to pale green, exerted beyond anthers. Stigma bilobed, lobes 0.3–0.7 × 0.4–1.0 mm, pink, subtended by whorl of hairs. Capsule 2.5–5.0 × 1.4–2.5 mm, green, often flushed purple-brown; thin-walled, seeds visible through wall, indehiscent and without apical valves, disintegrating with age; apex crowned with persistent style base; base obtuse to slightly cuneate. Seed, 0.4–0.5 mm long; olive green semi-glossy, glabrous, broadly elliptic to obovate-oblong, slightly compressed and often squared with flattened faces.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Differs from *Lobelia carens* Heenan and *L. fatiscens* Heenan by its usually glabrous stems, leaves, and flower parts, from *L. carens* by the large flowers that have purple blotches at the base of the lower three corolla lobes, and from *L. fatiscens* by its usually orbicular leaves, larger flowers, diploid (2n = 14) rather than tetraploid (2n = 28) chromosome number.

## FLOWERING

October - April

## FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, White

## FRUITING

November - June

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. An attractive ground cover for a damp sunny or semi-shaded site. An excellent pot plant.

## THREATS

Threatened because the wetland habitats it occupies have been or continue to be modified by changes in land use and naturalised plant species.

## ETYMOLOGY

**lobelia**: Named after Lobel, pioneer botanist

## ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Heenan *et al.* (2008).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan *et al.* 2008: Generic placement in *Lobelia* and revised taxonomy for New Zealand species previously in *Hypsela* and *Isotoma* (Lobeliaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 46: 87–100.

## MORE INFORMATION

