

Myosotis capitata

FAMILY

Boraginaceae

AUTHORITY

Myosotis capitata Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 46

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: Auckland Islands, Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku.

HABITAT

Found from sea level to 600 m a.s.l. in rocky places such as cliff faces, boulderfield and rock strewn ground, growing on thin peat soils and rock saprolite.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial rosette-forming herb. **Rosette** usually single, sometimes several and so appearing tufted; rosette lamina linear-oblong to spatulate, 30–120 × 10–25 mm, apex rounded, ± mucronate, petiole very wide and ill-defined; lamina densely clad in long, silky hairs, spreading, upper surface hairs numerous, hairs of leaf undersides shorter and sparser, tending toward glabrescent or glabrate. **Lateral branches** erect, few to many, occasionally branched, 50–300 mm long, internodes < leaves. **Stem-leaves** many, ± recurved, upper ones sessile and oblong, up to 40 mm long, tip rounded and mucronate; hairs long, fine, spreading, crowded, especially on upper surface. **Cymes** ebracteate, except for an occasional leaf near base, 8-flowered, short and usually branched; internodes between fruits usually much < calyx except towards base; pedicels very short. **Calyx** 3–5 mm long, lobes > ½ length, rather broad, obtuse, nerve rather strong, hairs numerous, not hooked, silky, mostly long. **Corolla** deep blue, 4–8 mm diameter, tube 3–5 mm, cylindric, lobes broadly rounded (e.g. 2.0 × 2.5 mm.) and flat; filaments very short, anthers up to 1 mm long, acute, tips reaching to or just beyond scales; style > calyx in fruit, stigma capitate. **Nutlets** 1.2–2.5 × 1.2–1.5 mm, black, acute, keeled on inner face.



In cultivation. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 01/12/2007, Licence: CC BY.



In cultivation. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 01/12/2007, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

The uniformly dark blue pigmented flowers, bright green leaves and restriction to the Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku, immediately distinguish this species from all other indigenous *Myosotis* spp. It could however be confused with the exotic *M. sylvatica*—which is commonly naturalised in New Zealand and not yet known from the Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku. *Myosotis sylvatica* is much bigger than *M. capitata*, grows in a wider range of usually disturbed weedy habitats and the corolla-lobes of the flowers have a white base to them.

FLOWERING

November–February

FLOWER COLOURS

Blue

FRUITING

December–February

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild. Can be grown from fresh seed but dislikes humidity and excessive heat. In cultivation even apparently healthy plants are often prone to sudden collapse.

THREATS

Not threatened. Listed because it is a narrow range endemic of the Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku. Some past reports suggest it is becoming less common on Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku but these observations are countered by other reports suggesting that while sparsely distributed it is still common there. It is for this reason this species has been qualified Data Poor (DP).

ETYMOLOGY

myosotis: Mouse-eared

capitata: From the Latin capitus 'head', with a knob-like head or tip

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 February 2008. Description based on Allan (1961).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsida, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/myosotis-capitata/>