

# Myosotis rakiura

## COMMON NAME

Stewart Island forget-me-not

## SYNONYMS

*Myosotis capitata* Hook.f. var. *albiflora* J.B.Armst.; *Myosotis capitata* Hook.f. subsp. *albida* Kirk; *Myosotis albida* (Kirk) Cheeseman nom. illegit. (non *Myosotis albida* Kunth)

## FAMILY

Boraginaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Myosotis rakiura* L.B.Moore

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

MYORAK

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

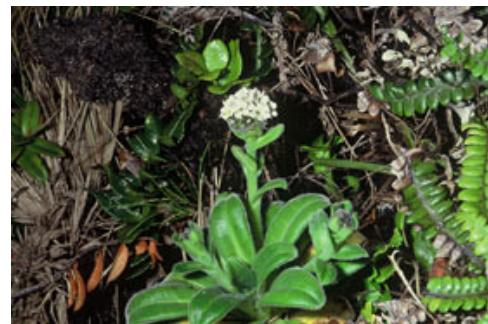
2004 | Range Restricted

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South (coasts of east and south Southland), Stewart and Snares Islands (also islands of Foveaux Strait including Solander Island).

## HABITAT

Coastal in open to partially shaded sites on rocks, cliff faces, in sand flats and in coastal turf bordering streams



*Myosotis rakiura* plant, on the Bluff Coast.  
Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



*Myosotis rakiura*, northern end of Masons Bay, Stewart Island. Photographer: Gillian M. Crowcroft, Licence: All rights reserved.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stout, tufted somewhat fleshy-succulent perennial herb. Rosette-leaves oblong-spathulate, up to 200 × 20 mm, tips rounded and obtuse, margins ± revolute, lamina gradually narrowed into broad, flat, somewhat succulent petiole, this usually less than lamina-length; hairs short, silky and spreading, very crowded, those on undersurface retrorse except near leaf-tip. Lateral branches few to many, ascending to erect, rather stout, up to 450 mm long, sometimes branched, internodes mostly equal to or less than leaf-length. Stem-leaves many, c.20-40 × 10-14 mm, ± oblong and obtuse; hairs like those of rosette-leaves but retrorse on undersurface only near base of lowermost leaves. Cymes ebracteate and usually several times branched, many-flowered, reaching 40 mm long in fruit; internodes and pedicels very short. Calyx 4-5 mm long, lobes cut to greater than half calyx length, rather broad, obtuse; hairs copious, rather short, flexuous, towards base irregularly hooked or sometimes retrorse. Corolla white, c.6-8 mm diameter, tube 3-5 mm long, cylindric, lobes spreading, c.2.5 × 2.5 mm, broadly oblong; filaments fixed just below scales, short but greater than anthers in length; anthers 1 mm long, broad, wholly above scales; style slightly longer than calyx in fruit, stigma capitate. Nutlet 1.7-2.1 × 1,1-1.4 mm, ovate, ovate-elliptic to broadly ovate, black.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Myosotis rakiura* is easily recognised by the combination of having stamens whose filaments are about the same length as the anthers, rosette-leaves which are broader than the stem leaves, an abundance of retrorse hairs on the leaf undersides, otherwise with hairs flexuous rather than straight, and not smoothly appressed. These features place it close to *M. macrantha* from which it differs by its ecological restriction to coastal rather than alpine habitats, much branched inflorescences; white flowers with a short tube, and calyces 4-5 mm rather than 6-9 mm long in fruiting material.

## FLOWERING

November - January

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

January - February

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

An attractive and easily grown native forget-me-not. It grows well in a moist but free draining soil. While it can tolerate full sun it does best in semi-shade. Fresh seed germinates readily, and plants once established, freely set seed, producing numerous seedlings. However, in humid climates plants are prone to powdery mildew infections, and like many other indigenous forget-me-nots plants are prone rust infections, which make the leaves swollen and unsightly.

## THREATS

Not threatened. *Myosotis rakiura* is a widespread and at times locally common species on Stewart Island, it is however scarce in its South Island habitats. This species is listed only because it naturally occupies a small geographic area. As far as is known there are no serious threats affecting this species.

## ETYMOLOGY

**myosotis:** Mouse-eared

**rakiura:** Named after the Maori name for Stewart Island. Rakiura is derived from raki 'sky' and ura 'glowing' or 'blush'. One explanation for the name is because of the beautiful sunsets seen from the Island. Another possible explanation is the name is derived from Te Ura-Te Raki-tamou 'the blush of Te Raki Tamou, in reference to a story of the shame of a Maori chief who went to the island to court a woman and subsequently found out she had a husband.

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## ATTRIBUTION

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

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington.

Reed, A. W. (2002). The Reed Dictionary of New Zealand Place Names. Reed Publishing. Auckland.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): Myosotis rakiura Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/myosotis-rakiura/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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