

Myosotis saxosa

SYNONYMS

Exarrhena saxosa Hook.f., *Myosotis amabilis* Cheeseman

FAMILY

Boraginaceae

AUTHORITY

Myosotis saxosa Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

MYOSAX

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DP, RR, St

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL, St

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: OL, St

2004 | Sparse

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, Raukumara Range (Mt Hikurangi, Arowhana), Te Urewera (Maungapohatu, Manuoha, Panekiri Bluff), and Hawke's Bay (Maungahararu Range, Titiokura)

HABITAT

Upper montane to alpine (> 1000 m a.s.l.) usually on limestone or similar calcareous substrates. Growing on rock ledges, in crevices and on talus, usually in relatively open habitats largely free clear or other vegetation.



Mt Hikurangi (February). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Compact to moderately compact, rosette forming, hoary, grey-green to green perennial herb. Rosette leaves numerous, often strongly overlapping; petiole 20-30 mm long, narrow, sheathing at base, lamina 20-30 x 5-10 mm, dark green to grey-green (due to hair covering), broadly ovate to obovate, apex apiculate, usually down turned (thus appearing emarginate); hairs copious, long, fine and silky, spreading, on undersides similar but more compact and more firmly appressed, sparse sometimes in antrorse/retrorse mixtures or regularly retrorse. Laterla branches ascending to erect up to 70 mm long, leafless below inflorescence, lower internodes < leaves. Cauline leaves 15 x 5 mm, elliptic, subacute to acute, sessile; hairs appressed, more delicate than those on rosette-leaves. Inflorescence cymose, 20 mm long, simple, ebracteate, up to 12-flowered; internodes < calyx; pedicels 2 mm long. Calyx 5-6 mm, lobes > 1/2 calyx length, oblong, subacute; hairs long, harsh to soft antrorse, with smaller, finer, more appressed often retrorse hairs forming a secondary layer below, flexuous, not hooked. Corolla 7-13 mm diameter, white, tube 3-5 mm long, cylindric to scale level, scales, vertical, elongate, confluent to mouth; tube flaring into a wide funneliform corolla with lobes 3 x 3.5 mm, filaments fixed between scales, reaching to lobes, anthers 1.5 mm; styles 5-8 mm long, stigma capitate. Nutlets 2.2. x 1.3 mm, black.

SIMILAR TAXA

Close to *M. monroi* Cheeseman which is an ultramafic endemic with yellow not white flowers confined to the Red Hills (north of the Wairau) and Mt Dun area of the South Island. NZPCN follow many other New Zealand botanists by including *M. amabilis* Cheeseman within *M. saxosa*, *M. amabilis* differs mainly by the more silky hairy rather than harsh hairy leaves which are said to be consistently rather than never aligned in a retrorse pattern on the undersides of the rosette leaves and calyx bases. However intermediates occur, even at the type locality of *M. saxosa* (Titikura).

FLOWERING

November - January

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

November - March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

One of the few New Zealand *Myosotis* species that can be easily cultivated at low elevations. However, plants often fail to flower, and dislike high humidity and excess moisture (soon succumbing to powdery mildew and various rusts under such conditions). An excellent pot plant, which should be grown in a free draining, high fertility soil, placed in the full sun.

THREATS

A very localised, sparsely distributed species which appears to be secure at its few known locations, partly because they are mostly high altitude habitats largely free of weeds.

ETYMOLOGY

myosotis: Mouse-eared

saxosa: Rock dweller

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.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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