

Ranunculus simulans

SYNONYMS

Ranunculus depressus var. *stewartiae* G.Simpson et J.S.Thomson

FAMILY

Ranunculaceae

AUTHORITY

Ranunculus simulans Garn.-Jones

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 32

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Sparse

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands. In the North Island known from Mt Taranaki, Kaimanawa and Ruahine Ranges. In the South Island recorded from north-west Nelson and Fiordland

HABITAT

Lowland to alpine (0-1200 m a.s.l.), in damp seepages and pools within forest, along stream banks and in seepages and flushes in subalpine scrub and herbfield.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

Commonly occurs as either a hydrophyte or non-hydrophyte (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Diminutive, tufted, rosette-forming perennial herb spreading by numerous, slender, trailing and arching stolons; these rooting freely at nodes. Basal leaves 3-10 mm diameter, dark green to bronze-green, suborbicular, shallowly 3-lobed at apex, lobe apices rounded, sometimes bluntly toothed again on lobes, base truncate, glabrous or finely hairy, membranous; cauline leaves similar but smaller, opposite or in lax whorls. Flowers solitary; scapes hairy and short, up to 15 mm long at fruiting. Flowers 3-5 mm diameter. Sepals spreading, sparsely hairy. Petals 0-5, yellow, narrowly obovate; nectary single, 0.5-1.5 mm from petal base, covered by a triangular scale. Receptacle hairy. Achenes 5-15, 1.4-1.9 mm long, dull medium buff to orange, light nut brown or grey brown, elliptic, broadly elliptic or broadly obovate; surface finely though regularly punctate, beak 0.1-0.3 mm long, hooked to dorsal side or reduced to remnant stub.



Franklin Mountains, Fiordland. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from all other New Zealand indigenous and naturalised *Ranunculus* spp., by the small size, slender, arching and/or trailing stolons which root freely at the nodes, and leaves 3-10 mm diameter, with the flowers 3-5 mm diameter. Morphologically it is perhaps closest to *R. cheesemanii* Kirk but that species has leaves 7-35 mm diameter with 3-5 blunt teeth or that are shallowly blunt with entire lobes, flowers 6-10mm diameter with fugaceous petals and achenes between 2-2.5 mm long.

FLOWERING

November - January

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

FRUITING

January - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Unknown. Probably easily grown but likely to require pot culture to prevent it being over taken by taller plants and weeds within a garden environment.

THREATS

Currently believed to be a very uncommon, widely distributed and biologically sparse species. It is very easily overlooked. There is as yet no clear evidence of any past or ongoing declines of this species within its known range.

ETYMOLOGY

ranunculus: From the Latin 'rana' frog, meaning little frog and probably refers to the plants typical marshy habit where frogs abound

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (30 August 2003). Description based on Webb et al. (1988) and fresh specimens

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. 1988: *Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV*. Christchurch, DSIR Botany Division.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/ranunculus-simulans/>