

Wahlenbergia matthewsii

COMMON NAME

rock harebell, Matthews's harebell

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Campanulaceae

AUTHORITY

Wahlenbergia matthewsii Cockayne

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

WAHMAT

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

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. South Island, Marlborough , Kaikoura Coast from the Flaxbourne River to Clarence River mouth and inland on the Chalk Range. Also known from the Pikikiruna Range at Gorge Creek (north-west Nelson)

HABITAT

Confined to calcareous rocks, especially fine grained limestone. Coastal to montane (0 - 800 m a.s.l.), and mainly restricted to gorges and steep cliffs. Less commonly found growing in boulder falls and on sparsely vegetated terraces.



In cultivation ex Kaikoura. Feb 2007.

Photographer: Robyn Smith, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Close up of flower, in cultivation ex Kaikoura.

Feb 2007. Photographer: Robyn Smith, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial, erect or spreading subshrub up to 300 mm tall. Tap root fleshy, white, soon developing rhizomes. Stems arising from base, initially brownish-white, 2-3 mm diameter, soon purple-red to purple, glabrous, branching at the top into 2 or more almost naked scapes. Leaves crowded on stems, 10 x 1 to 50 x 3 mm, dark green, linear, glabrous, margins entire or distantly, finely toothed, sometimes recurved. Scapes 100-150 mm long, simple or branched again, bearing a few, distant, narrow linear bracts 5-15 mm long. Inflorescence, terminal, pedunculate. Calyx glabrous, 4-5 x 1 mm, linear-triangular. Flowers pale blue to pale blue-lilac with white zoning and deeper blue or violet veins, or completely white; corolla 20-40 mm diameter, deeply campanulate with tube 7 x 5 to 9 x 6 mm, lobes spreading, 10 x 6 - 20 x 8 mm, ovate-lanceolate. Anthers linear, 4 mm long, style equalling corolla tube, stigma usually 2-lobed. Capsule glabrous, 6 x 4 to 12 x 6 mm long, domed obconic. Seeds 0.5 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

None. The distinctive erect subshrub habit, and branches bearing numerous, crowded, dark green linear leaves set this species well apart from any of the other New Zealand *Wahlenbergia* Roth.

FLOWERING

December - April

FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, Violet/Purple

FRUITING

January - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed. Does best in full sun, in a free draining, calcareous soil. Excellent in a rockery. A beautiful plant which deserves to be more widely cultivated than it is.

THREATS

Abundant within its Marlborough range but rather uncommon in north-west Nelson. Browse by animals where it is accessible but otherwise very common and not unduly threatened. This species is listed mainly because it is a narrow-range endemic.

ETYMOLOGY

wahlenbergia: Named in honour of Wahlenberg, a Swedish botanist and author of *A Botany of Lapland*.

matthewsii: After Mathews

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange 12 June 2007. Description adapted from Petterson (1997).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Petterson, J.A. 1997: Revision of the genus *Wahlenbergia* (Campanulaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 35: 9-54.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Wahlenbergia matthewsii* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wahlenbergia-matthewsii/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wahlenbergia-matthewsii/>