

Wahlenbergia violacea

COMMON NAME

violet harebell

SYNONYMS

Wahlenbergia gracilis sensu Allan nom. inv., Wahlenbergia marginata sensu Tuyn nom. inv., Wahlenbergia marginata var. australis Hatch nom. nud.

FAMILY

Campanulaceae

AUTHORITY

Wahlenbergia violacea J.A.Petterson

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

WAHVIO

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 72

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North and South Islands. Also Norfolk Island.

HABITAT

Rarely coastal, mostly inland and lowland in scrub or bracken-clothed hills, or thin pasture, usually on clay; rural roadsides, burnt or eroded or disturbed places, often invasive in gardens.



Coromandel, February. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Remutaka Rail Trail. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 04/03/2007, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Radicant perennial herb. **Stems** 100–500 mm tall, slender, erect or decumbent. **Leaves** oblanceolate to lanceolate to linear, shallowly denticulate to subentire, dark green, the lowermost 2–5 pairs opposite in seedlings and young shoots. **Pedicels** slender, 30–150 mm long. **Flowers** self-fertile, glabrous, 5–18 mm diameter, 2–10 mm long, bright blue-violet, paler outside. **Corolla** shortly campanulate, bowl-shaped, often with tube distinctly angled at the sinus; tube 1.5 × 3.0 mm to 3 × 4 mm, $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ length of corolla; corolla lobes ovate, acute, overlapping or touching in open flower, 3 × 2 mm to 7 × 4 mm. **Style** capitate, thickened, and blue at apex. **Stigmas** large, often white and fluffy. **Calyx lobes** glabrous 1.5 × 0.7 mm to 4 × 1 mm narrowly triangular, equal in length to corolla lobe. **Capsule** glabrous obconic, with protruding apical valves. **Bud** at anther dehiscence tinted blue. **Seeds** 0.5 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from the other New Zealand radicate *Wahlenbergia* Roth. by the blue-violet flower colour, shortly campanulate corolla with bowl-shaped tube, and ovate acute corolla lobes, touching or overlapping in the open flower, giving the flower a compact appearance. Usually there are 2–6 pairs of opposite leaves in young shoots and seedlings.

FLOWERING

November–April

FLOWER COLOURS

Blue, Violet/Purple

FRUITING

December–April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and rooted pieces. Does best in a sunny situation in well drained soil. In suitable conditions it freely naturalises and can even become weedy.

ETYMOLOGY

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

violacea: Violet coloured

WHERE TO BUY

Not Commercially Available

ATTRIBUTION

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

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Petterson JA. 1997. Revision of the genus *Wahlenbergia* (Campanulaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 35: 9–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1997.10410669>

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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