

Wurmbea novae-zelandiae

SYNONYMS

Anguillaria novae-zelandiae Hook.f., *Iphigenia novae-zelandiae* (Hook.f.)
Baker

FAMILY

Colchicaceae

AUTHORITY

Wurmbea novae-zelandiae (Hook.f. ex Kirk) Likhak, Survesw. et
S.R.Yadav

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

NVS CODE

IPHNOV

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 20

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP, RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP, RR

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DP, RR

2004 | Gradual Decline

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to the North and South Island. In the North Island possibly extinct, having been reported twice from the Maungaharuru Range. In the South Island it only occurs east of the main divide from Canterbury to Southland.

HABITAT

Lowland to subalpine swamps, tarns lake margins, in damp seepages within tussock grasslands and deflation hollows in alluvial outwash gravels.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FAC: Facultative

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



Mackenzie Basin. Photographer: Jane Gosden,
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Close up of Iphigenia in fruit, near Mossburn,
January 1995. Photographer: Gillian M.
Crowcroft, Licence: All rights reserved.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Summer-green, inconspicuous bulbous herb. Plants 30-80(-100) mm tall at flowering. Corm 7(-9) x 5(-8) mm, enclosed in persistent papery sheaths. Stem annual, slender, < leaves. Leaves (1-)2(-3), 20-90(-120) x 1-2(-8) mm, linear, deeply channelled or folded, apex terete. Below the flower are 1 or 2 smaller, green or petaloid bract-like leaves. Flower solitary, terminal. Tepals 3-6, 4-5 x 1.5 - 2 mm, oblong-lanceolate, obtuse, similar, white or slightly pink. Stamens 3-6, fused to tepal base. Ovary 2.5 mm diam., subglobose, styles widely divergent, and separating with the valves of the ripe capsules. Capsule 4-6(-10) x 2-3-6 mm, oval, pericarp at first green and fleshy, becoming woody on maturity, splitting into 2-6 wide-spreading valves. Seeds orange-brown, 1 mm diam., globose.

SIMILAR TAXA

None

FLOWERING

November - December

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

(Dec) January - February

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult and should not be removed from the wild.

THREATS

Threatened by wetland modification, drainage, and by the spread of weeds.

ETYMOLOGY

wurmbea: The genus *Wurmbea* is named after Christoph Carl Friedrich von Wurmbe (1742 - 1781), a German botanist who emigrated to Jakarta.

novae-zelandiae: Of New Zealand

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

COMMENTS

One of New Zealand's few indigenous bulb-bearing plants.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (1 August 2003). Description based on Moore & Edgar (1970) - see also de Lange et al. (2010).

Some content adapted from [Landcare Research eFlora, CC BY 3.0 NZ](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R.; Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: *Threatened Plants of New Zealand*. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch.

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: *Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II*. Wellington, Government Printer.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wurmbea-novae-zelandiae/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/wurmbea-novae-zelandiae/>