



Ranunculus grahamii

Common Name(s):

Grahams buttercup

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. South Island, Mt Cook National Park within a very small area running from Malte Brun Range in the east to the main divide in the west as far south as Mt Nazomi.

Habitat:

A high alpine (2300 - 2800 m a.s.l.) species of rock crevices, ledges, and cliff faces within the permanent snow line. It has a very short growing season during mid to late summer.

Features*:

Short, stout, erect, summer-green rosette-forming plant 70-120 mm tall. Rhizome stout, bearing numerous stringy rootlets. Leaves thick, fleshy, glaucous; radical leaves 3-4 or more; petioles 50-80 mm long with broad sheathing base, margins covered in white, sericeous hairs; blade 35-50 mm diam., glaucous, reniform, divided almost to base into 3 broadly cuneate segments, these again deeply lobed, succulent, coriaceous, glabrescent, margins with sparse long sericeous hairs. Flowering scape 1-3-flowered, 100-150 mm long, > leaves; bracts 1-2, similar to leaves but smaller and less divided. Flowers 20-30 mm diam.; sepals 5, broadly oblong, obtuse, external faces sericeous; petals golden yellow, 8-16, narrow-obovate, obtuse, nectaries near base, single or multiple; stamens numerous, in 2 or more series; receptacle broadly oblong or nearly orbicular. Achenes glabrous or sparsely hairy on body toward base. Body turgid, ovoid, 2.5-3.0(-3.5) mm long; surface dull, pale brown; beak 2.5-3.0 mm long, curved.

Flowering:

February - March

Fruiting:

March - May

Threats:

A very localised endemic of high alpine cliff and ledge habitats, within the permanent snow line. Because of its habitat and altitudinal range it is not often seen except by rock climbers, so exact numbers of plants in the wild is unclear. It is believed to be at some risk from Thar and Chamois. Provided numbers of these browsing animals are kept low it is not believed to be seriously threatened.

***Attribution:**

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (12 February 2007). Description based on Fisher (1965).

References and further reading:

Fisher, F.J.F. 1965: The alpine *Ranunculi* of New Zealand. *Bulletin, New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research* 165: 1-192.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=655



Caption: Close up of flowers

Photographer: David Norton