



Cardamine bilobata

Common Name(s):

native bittercress

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic to the eastern South Island. North-west Nelson and east of the main divide.

Habitat:

Mainly low alpine 900-1500m altitude. Usually in fellfield, on moraine or scree edges, or rock crevices, also damp places in tussock grassland.

Features:

Low growing herb with single rosettes or in small clumps. Leaves deeply three lobed, sometimes with additional pair of leaflets; dull green to purplish, thin, fleshy, hairless. Flower stems sparsely branched, hairless, up to 30cm tall. Flowers large, white, about 8mm across, 4-petalled with 6 stamens. Seeds up to 1mm long, pale brown, oblong, in slender linear pods up to 2.5cm long.

Flowering:

January to February

Fruiting:

January to February

Threats:

Based on herbarium evidence it would seem that the species was more widespread and common than it is now. Being a cress it is highly palatable, and it may have declined as a result of browsing pressure. The species is also considered to be quite elusive (P.B. Heenan pers. comm.) and is rarely seen even in apparently suitable habitat.

References and further reading:

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

For more information, visit:

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