



Stellaria multiflora subsp. *multiflora*

Current Threat Status (2012):

Extinct

Distribution:

Indigenous. Australia (extant), New Zealand, North and South Islands. In the North Island known only from collections made from the southern Hawkes Bay (Lake Rotoatara, Colenso, September 1845 (this lake was drained in 1888)), and in the South Island from the Canterbury Plains (Ashburton), the Waitaki Valley (Kurow) and from Central Otago. It was also reported from Cape Kidnappers

Habitat:

Lowland to montane, along lake sides, in river beds, and other seasonally damp habitats. Sparse herbarium annotations suggest it grew in short grass near lake margins. One collection from the Ashburton River has *Raoulia monroi* and *Stellaria gracilentia* mixed within it.

Features*:

Tufted, glabrous, dark green to glaucescent, annual herb 15-40 mm tall. Stems decumbent to weakly suberect, usually several arising from base. Leaves dark green or glaucous. Petiole short 1-2 mm. Lamina 3-5 mm long, narrow-oblong or oblanceolate, apex subacute to acute, base cuneate. Flowers solitary; peduncles slender 3-10 mm, erect. Bracts leaf like. Sepals 2-3 mm, lanceolate, narrowly ovate-lanceolate, to linear-lanceolate, weakly 1-veined; margins finely but irregularly toothed. Petals absent. Stamens 5-10. Capsule ovoid or globose, < or = sepals. Seeds red-brown, 0.6-0.7 mm, surface with large, rounded tubercles.

Flowering:

October - November

Fruiting:

October - November

Threats:

In New Zealand this species seems to have declined and gone extinct because of habitat modification and possibly the spread of weeds into its marginal turf and ephemeral wetland habitats. It was last collected in New Zealand in 1921 (Heenan 2019).

***Attribution:**

Fact Sheet by P.J. de Lange (15 August 2008). Description adapted from de Lange et al. (2010).

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. Christchurch, Canterbury University Press. 471pp.

Heenan, P.B. 2019: Taxonomic notes on the New Zealand flora: the status of the extinct herb *Stellaria elatinoidea* (Caryophyllaceae) and recognition of *Stellaria multiflora* subsp. *multiflora* from New Zealand. New Zealand Journal of Botany 57: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.2019.1645705>

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