

Rare forget-me-nots discovered in the mountains of New Zealand

August 21 2012



This is the habitat where Chaffey's forget-me-not (*M. chaffeyorum*) is commonly found. Credit: Photo by Dr Carlos Lehnebach

Two rare species of forget-me-nots have been added to Flora of New Zealand. These new species were discovered in the mountains of the South Island during an expedition led by Dr. Carlos A. Lehnebach. These new species have been described and illustrated in an article published in the open access journal *PhytoKeys*.



This is Moore's forget-me-not and its flowers. Credit: Photo by Dr Carlos Lehnebach

The expedition was part of a major endeavour by a group of [botanists](#) at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in partnership with Landcare Research aiming to describe and list all forget-me-nots (*Myosotis*) found in New Zealand. Dr. Lehnebach, who is a curator at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand, describes the mountains of the South Island of New Zealand as a [hotspot](#) for forget-me-nots diversity as over 30 species are found there.

"The diversity of forms, [flower color](#) and leaf shape of New Zealand forget-me-nots is really amazing" said Dr. Lehnebach. "New Zealand forget-me-nots are far different from their blue flower relatives commonly found in people's gardens, and some [native species](#) have yellow, pink, or tube-like brown-bronze flowers. New Zealand is also home for the smallest forget-me-not in the world!" he added.

These two new species are extremely uncommon. One is currently known from a single spot where only six plants were found. The other species is habitat-specific and it is only found at the base of limestone bluffs. "Because of the low number of plants and populations currently

known for these forget-me-nots, they have been rated as Nationally Critical", said Dr. Lehnebach. This is not unusual for New Zealand forget-me-nots, and many of them are currently threatened.

More information: Lehnebach CA (2012) Two new species of forget-me-nots (Myosotis, Boraginaceae) from New Zealand. *PhytoKeys* 16: 53. [doi: 10.3897/phytokeys.16.3602](https://doi.org/10.3897/phytokeys.16.3602)

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