

Disturbance and plant association relationships with *Epilobium hirtigerum*: implications for management

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Epilobium hirtigerum (A.Cunn, 1839) is a threatened herbaceous species in the Onagraceae family. Data deficient for many years, a population has been located in the Auckland suburb of Hobsonville, within an area identified for development. In New Zealand *E. hirtigerum* is associated with swamps, wetland edges and country roadsides strongly suggesting disturbance is a key factor in its establishment. These habitats are also frequently suitable for weed species. These two factors complicate implementation of conservation measures. We report here on seedling establishment and growth of *E. hirtigerum* at this site based on counts and percentage cover estimates in sampling quadrats established in disturbed and non-disturbed plots. In addition, we describe plant associations at randomly identified points within the study site, stratified based on whether *E. hirtigerum* plants are absent or present at the sampling point. Our research aims to inform management options being explored by Auckland Council for this population.