

Centipeda aotearoana

COMMON NAME

New Zealand sneezewort

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Centipeda aotearoana N.G.Walsh

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

CENAOT

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 20

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Data Deficient

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand, Three Kings, North and South Islands.

HABITAT

Open damp ground, lake, tarn and river margins, ephemeral wetlands, and drains.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

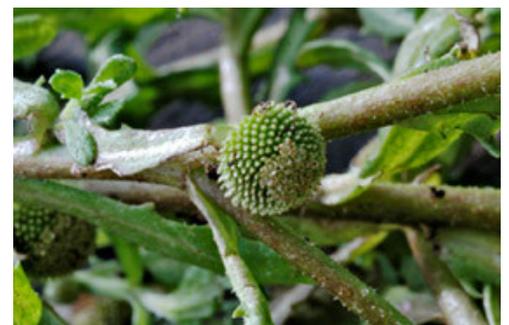
Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Annual to short-lived perennial prostrate herb forming circular patches 10-30 cm diameter. Stems trailing, prostrate, sparsely to moderately covered in cottony-hairs. Leaves yellow-green, obovate to spatulate in outline, 4-8(-12) mm long, 1.5-4 mm wide, margins with 1-3 acute to blunt teeth, rarely entire. Inflorescence a single leaf-opposed, unstalked hemispherical, capitula (daisy-like structure), domed, 3-4(-7) mm diameter, female (outer) florets c.60-120 in 3-5 rows, bisexual flowers 8-16. Fruiting heads persistent. Cypselas (seeds) brown, club-shaped or narrowly cylindrical, 1.2-1.7 mm long, 4-angled with prominent ribs at each of the angles, smooth or finely scabrid in lower portion, glandular hairs sparse or absent, non-glandular hairs spreading or subappressed, confined to ribs.



In cultivation ex Waitakere. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/10/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Te Hapua, nr Otaki. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA

Most likely to be confused with *C. elatinoides* (Less.) Benth. et Hook. and *C. cunninghamii* (DC.) A. Braun et Asch. *Centipeda elatinoides* differs by its hairless or slightly cob-webbed branchlets, shortly stalked capitula, and narrowly obovate cypselas with rounded apices. *Centipeda cunninghamii* differs by its erect growth form, leaves longer than 10 mm, and by possessing 20 or more bisexual florets in the capitula. *C. aotearoana* can be immediately distinguished by its hemispherical fruiting capitula.

FLOWERING

Herbarium specimens and field notes indicate it may flower from mid summer through to autumn but plants may continue flowering into winter.

FRUITING

Herbarium specimens suggest that fruit is produced in late summer to autumn.

LIFE CYCLE

Cypselae dispersed by wind, attachment and granivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from rooted pieces and fresh seed.

THREATS

Centipeda aotearoana was described by Australian Botanist Neville Walsh in 2001. At the time of its description the comment was made that this species does not appear to be rare. Current indications are that *C. aotearoana* is probably a naturally sparse, opportunistic species.

ETYMOLOGY

centipeda: From the Greek word for one hundred feet

aotearoana: From the Maori name for New Zealand (although originally the name only referred to the North Island). Derived from the Maori ao 'cloud, daytime, world' and tea 'white' and roa 'long', usually translated as 'land of the long white cloud', a reference to the appearance of the island from the sea.

NOTES ON TAXONOMY

Collectively the four species now recognised from New Zealand were all regarded by Allan (1961) as *C. orbicularis*, a later synonym of *C. minima*. Webb et al. (1988) were the first to recognise *C. minima* and *C. cunninghamii* as present in New Zealand.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (5 May 2005). Description adapted from Walsh (2001).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Deverson, T., Kennedy G. 2005: *The New Zealand Oxford Dictionary*. Oxford University Press: Victoria.
- 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* 11: 285-309.
- Walsh, N.G. 2001: A revision of *Centipeda* (Asteraceae). *Muelleria* 15: 33-64.
- Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. (eds). 1988: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV. Christchurch, Botany Division, D.S.I.R. 1365 pp.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/centipeda-aotearoana/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/centipeda-aotearoana/>