

Azorella macquariensis

SYNONYMS

Azorella selago auctt. non Hook.f.

FAMILY

Apiaceae

AUTHORITY

Azorella macquariensis Orchard

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Evaluated

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to Macquarie Island.

HABITAT

The dominant species of the feldmark vegetation community and also common in other windswept situations. Forming dense, extensive cushions and tight mats through which little other vegetation can penetrate.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial herb forming extensive compact mats, cushions, or in exposed situations button-like balls; main branches prostrate, woody to 5 mm in diameter; lateral shoots erect, herbaceous, freely branched, crowded, 30-150 mm tall, clothed in old leaf remnants. Leaves alternate, imbricate, appressed to stems, persistent; petioles white 3-10 mm long, thickened at apex, 3-5-veined, with a membranous wing outside the veins, the wings fused to form a sheath around the stem in the lower 1/4-1/2 and produced above to form a very short runcate ridge-like ligule at the base of the lamina; lamina 3-5-partite, lobes divided almost to base of leaves, lanceolate, 1.7-4 x 0.6-1.4 mm, thick and more or less fleshy, acute with a terminal setose apiculum, margins thickened, glabrous or with 1-5 bristle-like hairs 1.4-4 mm long on the undersides. Flowers terminal, solitary or paired, hermaphrodite, peduncles short with the flowers enclosed by the upper leaves. Involucral bracts 2, fused at the base to form a small cup, leaf-like or lanceolate. Sepals 5, 0.5-0.9 mm long white, linear, unequal. Petals 5, 1.5-2 mm long, pale reddish brown, incurved, somewhat cucullate, acute. Stamens 5, 1.7-3 mm long. Styles 2, 0.75-1 mm long, with a swollen stylopodium at the base. Ovary slightly laterally compressed. Fruit yellow-brown, sessile or on a pedicel 1 mm long (so hidden amongst leaves); body of fruit obovoid and slightly flattened laterally 1.3-1.7 x 1-1.5 mm, 0.9-1 mm thick, weakly ribbed, styles persistent, sepals deciduous.



Varne Plateau, Macquarie Island. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 05/01/2016, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.



Varne Plateau, Macquarie Island. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 02/01/2016, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.

SIMILAR TAXA

Azorella selago Hook.f. which is known from Tierra del Fuego, the Falklands, Marion, Crozet, Kerguelen and Heard Islands but not Macquarie. *A. macquariensis* differs from *A. selago* by its smaller size and leaf shape. The current seasons leaves are 3-lobed compared to the 4-7-lobed seen in *A. selago*; in *A. macquariensis* the lobes are divided almost to the leaf base, the apices are acute and bristle-tipped rather than blunt and rounded as in *A. selago*. The ligule also differs in *A. macquariensis* in that it is a short, ridge-like truncate or slightly rounded structure while in *A. selago* it comprises two distinct, rounded auricles. The flowers of *A. macquariensis* are solitary or rarely paired rather than in groups of 3, the fruits 1.7 cf. 1.7-2 mm long and are sessile or virtually so, therefore they are hidden in the upper leaves rather than exerted from the leaves as in the distinctly pedicellate *A. selago*, finally the sepals are deciduous in *A. macquariensis* and persistent in *A. selago*.

FLOWERING

December - February

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

January - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Unknown

THREATS

This is a Macquarie Island endemic and occurs in the New Zealand Botanical Region but it is not encompassed by the New Zealand threat classification process as Macquarie is under the management of Australia.

Cats, rats, mice and rabbits introduced by sealers in the early 1800s posed a significant threat to species endemic to Macquarie Island and when cats were initially eradicated nearly a century later there was an explosion in rabbit numbers. Further efforts were made to remove rodents by the Australian Government and in 2014 Macquarie was declared pest free.

ETYMOLOGY

macquariensis: From Macquarie Island

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 November 2008. Description from Orchard (1989).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Orchard, A.E. 1989: *Azorella* Lamarck (Apiaceae) on Heard and Macquarie Islands, with description of a new species, *A. macquariensis*. *Muelleria* 7(1): 15-20.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Azorella macquariensis* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/azorella-macquariensis/>