

Cassinia amoena

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Cassinia amoena Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

CASAMO

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 26-28

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: OL

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: CD, ST, OL

2004 | Range Restricted

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Small bushy shrub inhabiting coastal cliffs of the northern tip of the North Island. Twigs coated in white fuzz. Leaves small, narrow, dark green, scattered along twigs, wrinkled, with white fuzz underneath. Flowers white, in round clusters at tip of twigs. Small seed with a hair tuft at the tip.

DISTRIBUTION

North Island. Northland - Surville cliffs only.

HABITAT

Seaside cliffs.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrub occasionally up to 1 m tall. Branchlets stout, greyish-tomentose. Leaves more or less 6-18 x 2-3 mm, finally spreading, narrow linear-obovate to narrow-spathulate on short erect petioles, coriaceous, glabrous above when mature, densely white-tomentose below, margins slightly revolute. Capitula numerous, in close corymbs, pedicels short. Phyllaries in 3-4 series, outer tomentose to pubescent on back, inner with white radiating tips; forming a narrow-turbinate involucre 4-5 mm long. Florets 4-6; scales of receptacle absent or up to 2, white-tipped. Achenes approximately 1 mm long, pubescent to silky-hairy; pappus-hairs up to 3.5 mm long, slightly thickened at tips.

SIMILAR TAXA

Ozothamnus leptophylla has smaller leaves (2-4 x 1-2.5 mm); and, is generally a larger specimen (2-3 m); widespread throughout the country, *C. amoena* is only found in the Surville cliffs area.



Surville Cliffs (Sept). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Surville Cliffs, Te Pahi. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 08/11/2007, Licence: CC BY.

FLOWERING

August-December

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

September-January

ETYMOLOGY

cassinia: Named after French botanist Alexandre de Cassini.

amoena: From the Latin amoenus 'delightful, beautiful, pleasing'

TAXONOMIC NOTES

In regard to hybridism discussed in Allan (1961). The N.Z. members of the genus are still inadequately studied, especially with reference to the discrimination between true-breeding and hybrid forms. Carse describes his x *C. amoenatorta* (*C. amoena* × *retorta*) and remarks: "There appear to be three predominant forms: (a) Very near to *C. amoena* but with shorter leaves, 6-9 mm. long (10-17 mm. in *C. amoena*), tomentum of leaves and branchlets more yellow, heads rather broader; (b) similar, but smaller in leaves which are more yellow; (c) resembles *C. retorta* (now a synonym of *Ozothamnus leptophylla*) but with few florets in the heads. North Island: North Cape District on slope above Kerr Point, where *C. amoena*, *C. retorta* and intermediate forms are not uncommon. In the extreme north of Auckland Province, the tomentum on the branchlets and leaves of *C. retorta* is much more yellow than that on more southern plants which is usually whitish." *C. retorta* also appears to cross with *C. vauvilliersii* (now *O. vauvilliersii*), as does *C. leptophylla*.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Allan (1961).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Wellington: Government Printer. pg. 727, 729.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cassinia-amoena/>