

# Drosera pygmaea

## COMMON NAME

pygmy sundew

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Droseraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Drosera pygmaea* DC.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## NVS CODE

DROPYG

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Relict | Qualifiers: DP, SO

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DP, SO

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DP, SO

2004 | Gradual Decline

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island (Te Paki to about Dargaville, west of Auckland, near Waiouru), South Island (near Bluff Hill). It is probably present elsewhere but its small size and often reddish colouration makes it difficult to see in the open, clay pans and peaty ground it favours. Australia (common).

## HABITAT

Coastal to subalpine. Usually in gumland and pakihi shrublands and adjoining wetlands, especially peat bogs. Also present on seasonally damp clay pans developed over ultramafic soils. This species requires open ground and will not long persist in the presence of other taller plants.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

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



Spirits Bay, Te Paki (from a specimen collected by Andrew Townsend). Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 06/11/2007, Licence: CC BY.



*Drosera pygmaea*. Photographer: Kevin Matthews, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Diminutive, annual to biennial, dark red, bright green or yellow-green plants forming rosettes 5–20 mm diameter.

**Gemma** 40–70 per plant, 0.7–0.8 × 0.6 mm, reniform, flattened, dark red or green; appearing February–June.

**Leaves** 6–12, radical; stipules 1.1–5.0 × 0.5–0.9 mm, attached to base of upper petiole surface, lacinate, hyaline to silvery-white, trifid, central lobe cut 2–3 times, lateral lobes 2-pointed; petiole 3–6 × 0.4–0.5 mm, linear, narrowing towards lamina, glabrous; lamina 1.5–2.0 × 2.0–2.6 mm, subpeltate, peltate, suborbicular to orbicular, dark red, bright green, or yellow-green, upper surface deeply concave, glandular hairs 1.5–2.8 mm. **Inflorescence** scapigerous; scapes 5.0–18.0 × 0.2 mm, erect, wiry, dark red, bright green or yellow-green, surface sparsely glandular-papillate. **Flowers** 1–per scape, 3 mm diameter, tetramerous, white, scentless. **Sepals** 4, 1.0–0.6 mm, obovate, upper ½ irregularly toothed, dark red, green or green-red, glabrous. **Petals** 4, 1.5–1.8 × 1.2–1.4 mm, narrowly obovate to obovate, white. **Stamens** 4, 0.6–0.8 mm, filaments white, anthers light yellow. **Fruit** 1.6 × 1.4 mm, orbicular, orbicular-obovate, dark red, green or green-red, containing up to 40 seeds. **Seeds** 0.4 × 0.25 mm, ovoid, black, surface deeply scalariform.

## SIMILAR TAXA

The much more common and large *D. spatulata* is often confused for *D. pygmaea*. From *D. spatulata*, *D. pygmaea* can be immediately recognised by the prominent, erect tuft of stipules, which are much longer than the associated leaves.

## FLOWERING

October–March

## FLOWER COLOURS

White

## FRUITING

December–May

## LIFE CYCLE

Minute seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult and should not be removed from the wild.

## THREATS

At serious risk over much of its known range from wetland drainage and the spread of larger, faster growing weeds. Probably extinct in the Auckland area due to drain clearance and road maintenance, and it may now have gone from the Central Volcanic Plateau as a consequence of the spread of faster growing naturalised grasses into some of the key wetland habitats it was known from. Still common from Kaitaia and Doubtless Bay north, though here too many of its key habitats are either drained, being drained or are vulnerable to spread of taller and faster growing weeds.

## ETYMOLOGY

**drosera**: Dewy

**pygmaea**: Tiny

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2008). Description based on Salmon (2001), live and herbarium specimens - see also de Lange et al. (2010).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

de Lange PJ, Heenan PB, Norton DA, Rolfe JR, Sawyer JWD. 2010. Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch. 471 p.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

Salmon B. 2001. Carnivorous plants of New Zealand. Ecosphere Publications, Auckland, NZ. 303 p.

### **NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION**

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Drosera pygmaea* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/drosera-pygmaea/> (Date website was queried)

### **MORE INFORMATION**

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/drosera-pygmaea/>