

# Haastia pulvinaris

## COMMON NAME

Vegetable sheep

## SYNONYMS

*Haastia pulvinaris* Hook.f.

## FAMILY

Asteraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Haastia pulvinaris* Hook.f.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 60

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island: Marlborough to Canterbury (east of the main divide).

## HABITAT

Subalpine and alpine fellfield and rocks among screes.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stout perennial forming rounded very compact masses up to 2 x 1 m diameter; branchlets with leaves c.20 mm diameter, densely compacted. Leaves c.8-10 × 6-10 mm; apices thickened and crenulate and concealed by dense brush of long tangled slightly fulvous hairs, both surfaces or underside only clad in long hairs; veins 3-15, anastomosing above. Receptacle flat or slightly convex, c.5 mm diameter. Involucral bracts linear, obtuse to acute, glabrous except at apices. Achenes compressed, linear, c.2 mm long. Pappus-hairs flattened at base, up to 9 mm long.



Julius rocks, Nelson, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Near main ridge, inland Kaikoura. Photographer: Simon Moore, Licence: CC BY-SA.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Haastia pulvinaris* is easily recognised by its growth habit. This is the famous vegetable sheep of the eastern South Island. Plants producing extremely compact, rounded masses up to 2 x 1 m diameter. From the other two species of *Haastia* it is easily distinguished by this growth habit, the other two species (*H. recurva* and *H. sinclairii*) having a more widely spreading, openly branched, distinctly leafy growth habit. *Haastia minor* is distinguished from *H. pulvinaris* by its much smaller size (only rarely forming hummocks up to 1 x 1 m), branchlets < 15 mm diameter, and by the distinctly whitish tomentum. *Haastia pulvinaris* could be confused with species of *Raoulia*, especially *R. bryoides*, *R. eximia* and *R. mammillaris* with which it sometimes grows. From *Raoulia*, *Haastia* is distinguished by the anther-cells which are not tailed, and by the leaves which are > 10 mm long. Recent molecular data suggests that *Haastia* is very closely allied to *Brachyglottis*.

## FLOWERING

November - January

## FRUITING

December - February

## LIFE CYCLE

Pappate cypselae are dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

## ETYMOLOGY

**haastia:** After Haast

**pulvinaris:** From the Latin pulvinar 'a cushion' and -aris 'resembling', meaning resembling a cushion i.e. convex or rather flattened

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Allan (1961)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I, Government Printer, Wellington.

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.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/haastia-pulvinaris/>