

Leptinella conjuncta

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2009)

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Leptinella conjuncta Heenan

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 104

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: Sp

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Critical

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island. Central Otago (the catchments of the Clutha, Nevis, and Manuherikia rivers), and southern Canterbury (Mackenzie Basin).

HABITAT

Inner montane basins and river terraces. Known from dry, semi-arid and rain-shadow areas where it predominantly grows on terraces, terrace edges, and old river channels of gravels and alluvium.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Creeping perennial herb forming small open patches. Branches in clusters of up to 4 radiating from a flowering node. Leaves 1-pinnatifid, pectinate, 6–20 × 2–5mm, blade elliptic or obovate, coriaceous, moderately to densely villous, dark green to brown-green; pinnae in 5–12 pairs, 1.0–2.5 × 0.3–0.5mm, oblong, obovate or linear, apex obtuse to subacute, margin entire, terminal pinna and distal 1–3 pairs of pinnae usually joined together. Peduncles longer than leaves, 20–100mm long, 0.4–0.6mm diameter, sparsely to densely villous. Monoecious, capitula up to 5mm diameter. Involucre with phyllaries 12–24 in 2 or more subequal rows, oblong, dark green or grey-green, with 1–3 dark veins sometimes obscured by sparse to dense hairs, margin wide, brown, scarious. Pistillate florets 12–24, in 1 row; 2.0–2.7mm long, white, cream or translucent, often with 1–2 dark longitudinal stripes along corolla and ovary; corolla 1.0–1.1 × 0.5–0.6mm, lobes 4–5, each 0.1–0.2mm long; ovary 1.0–1.2 × 0.4–0.5mm, style c. 1.2mm long, stigmatic arms 0.1–0.15mm long. Staminate florets 20–50, in 3–5-rows, 2.5–2.9mm long, white, cream or translucent, often with 1–2 dark stripes along corolla and ovary, corolla with scattered sessile glandular trichomes; corolla tube 1.2–1.4 × 0.3–0.35mm, partially translucent to white; inflated corolla 0.7–0.9 × 0.9–1.0mm, translucent; corolla lobes 4–5, 0.5–0.6mm long, white, triangular, patent; ovary 0.7–0.8 × 0.25–0.35mm; stigma c. 0.2 mm diameter; filaments 1.0–1.2mm long, partially translucent to white; anthers 0.7–0.8mm long, yellow. Achenes up to 2.1 × 0.7mm, ± compressed, biconvex, golden-brown, scarcely to deeply wrinkled.



Leptinella conjuncta. Photographer: Peter B. Heenan, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Leptinella conjuncta. Photographer: Peter B. Heenan, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA

Leptinella conjuncta is most similar to the *L. pectinata* complex but is distinguished from members of that complex by leaves that are densely hairy, 6–10mm long, and with the terminal pinna and 1–3 lateral pinnae conspicuously joined near their base; a peduncle that is shorter and more slender; a smaller capitulum; and fewer and shorter pistillate and staminate florets.

FLOWERING

October – April

FLOWER COLOURS

Cream, White

FRUITING

October – May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in cultivation. Best propagated by division. An attractive free flowering and rather adaptable button daisy that does well in a free draining, sunny situation. It does not relish excessive moisture and humidity.

THREATS

The main threats to *Leptinella conjuncta* are habitat modification for horticultural and agricultural purposes and competition from naturalised species. The small size of most populations means that with disturbance the species could easily be lost from a particular place. The 2004 status shown above is taken from de Lange *et al.* (2004) in which the taxon was listed as the undescribed species *Leptinella* (a) (CHR 515297; Clutha River).

ETYMOLOGY

leptinella: From the Greek word leptos (meaning slender, thin or delicate), referring to the ovary

ATTRIBUTION

Description from: Heenan (2009).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan, P.B. 2009: A diminutive new species of *Leptinella* (Asteraceae) from arid habitats of the South Island, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 127–132.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/leptinella-conjuncta/>