

Leptinella traillii subsp. pulchella

SYNONYMS

Cotula pulchella Kirk, *Cotula dioica* var. *pulchella* (Kirk) Cheeseman, C. traillii subsp. *pulchella* (Kirk) D.G.Lloyd

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Leptinella traillii subsp. *pulchella* (Kirk) D.G.Lloyd et C.Webb

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

LEPTSP

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DP, RR, Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION


Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Southland, northern side of the Foveaux Strait).

HABITAT

Coastal, usually on seepages on cliff faces, amongst boulders or on cobble beaches. Sometimes in damp hollows or along stream sides draining sand dunes.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dioecious, creeping, perennial herb forming an open to loosely matted turf. **Rhizomes** at or near soil surface, green, dark green to brown, pliant, villously hairy; branches uncommon, usually single at flowering nodes; leaves in two rows, single at apex, 5–20 mm apart. Short shoots alternate on both sides of rhizome, bearing up to 6 clustered leaves, rarely converted into rhizomes with distant leaves. **Roots** slender, weak, white up to 0.6 mm diameter. **Leaves** 1-pinnatifid, 10–50 × 4–10 mm; lamina 10–40 mm, obovate, firmly fleshy (rarely weakly coriaceous), scarcely glandular punctate, dark green, with basal pinnae pigmented dark brown, sparsely villous; midrib slightly raised on proximal part of ventral surface; pinnae 4–10 pairs, equidistant, not overlapping, cut to rachis, oblong to broadly ovate (width less than length); with 4–(10) rather coarse and widely spaced, broadly triangular teeth per pinna, these confined to outer margin or rarely extending onto distal margin, cut  –½ across pinna, acuminate with a sharp pale, often deciduous point, more or less obscured by a tuft or parallel hairs. **Peduncles** usually on rhizomes, about equal to leaves in length, 10–40 mm, ebracteate or with one simple bract, pilose-hairy. **Pistillate capitula** 3–5 mm diameter, up to 10 mm in fruit; surface convex; involucre urecolate; involucral bracts 15–20, unequally triseriate, broadly elliptic, green, more or less villous, with a broad hyaline, brown-tipped scarious margin; inner involucral bracts elongating after anthesis to enclose the subglobose fruiting head; florets 20–70, 2–5 mm long, curved, yellow-green; corolla slightly longer than wide, unequally toothed. **Staminate heads** 4–6 mm diameter, involucre hemispherical; involucral bracts 5–10 in 1–2 subequal rows, not extending after anthesis; florets generally more numerous. **Cypsela** up to 1.9 × 1 mm, brown, somewhat compressed, at first chartaceous becoming smooth at maturity.

SIMILAR TAXA

Leptinella traillii (Kirk) D.G.Lloyd et C.Webb subsp. *traillii* is rather similar but it is endemic to the Stewart Island/Rakiura coastline and has distinctly leathery, firmer and thicker, glandular punctate leaves, and the pinna teeth are finer and smaller and evenly spaced.

FLOWERING

August–October

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

FRUITING

September–January

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from rooted pieces, once established very tolerant of trampling and drought but prefers a damp root run.

THREATS

Not considered to face any active threats. A narrow range endemic that would be susceptible to adverse changes.

ETYMOLOGY

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

traillii: After Charles Trail, Stewart Islander

pulchella: Pretty little thing

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries. Often sold as *L. squalida* or *L. dioica*.

CULTURAL USE/IMPORTANCE

One of the main contributing species to the so called “Maniototo” bowling green turfs (see *Leptinella maniototo* (Petrie) D.G.Lloyd et C.Webb).

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 31 August 2006. Description from Lloyd (1972)—as *Cotula traillii* subsp. *pulchella*.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Lloyd DG. 1972. A revision of the New Zealand, Subantarctic, and South American species of *Cotula*, section *Leptinella*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 10(2): 277–372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1972.10429156>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/leptinella-traillii-subsp-pulchella/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/leptinella-traillii-subsp-pulchella/>