

Olearia crebra

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Olearia crebra E.K.Cameron et Heenan

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: CD, RR

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Small tree bearing very large leathery leaves that have a rusty brown fuzzy underside inhabiting upland Waima Forest in Northland. Leaves 80-290 mm long. Flowers white with yellow centre, body 10-12 mm long. Seeds small, with a hairy tip.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, Waima Forest, where it is known from the local high points of Hauturu, Te Raupua and Mt Misery.

HABITAT

In cloud forest. Now primarily on cliff faces, although this habitat is probably not entirely natural - the cliffs are acting as refugia from goats and other browsing animals, which periodically plague the only known habitats of this species.



Mt Hauturu, Waima in November.

Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



At Mt Hauturu, Waima in November.

Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small tree 4-7 m tall, with upright to spreading growth form. Bark light grey, somewhat rough and peeling off in small plates. Petiole 10-20 x 2-2.45 mm. Leaves clustered in groups of 8-12 at branch apices, alternate, 80-290 x 45-120 mm, elliptic, obovate to oblanceolate, coriaceous, upper surface dark green, under sides covered in red brown appressed tomentum; lamina margin somewhat sinuate, apex obtuse; base cuneate to attenuate. Inflorescence a lateral panicle of 210-220 capitula. Capitulum 10-12 mm long. Pedicel 7-15 mm long, densely invested in short fulvous hairs. Involucre cylindrical, bracts (30-)40-54, spiraled in 7-9 rows, light brown, recurved at maturity; outer bracts 1.5-2.6 x 0.8-1.4 mm, narrowly triangular, outer surface sparsely to moderately hairy, margins fimbriate. Florets 18-26 per capitulum. Ray-florets 10-15, pistillate; corolla glabrous, tube 2.7 mm long, ligulate with deflexed white limb 3.5-8 x 1.2-1.6 mm, 2-3-lobed at apex. Disc florets 8-11, hermaphrodite, corolla glabrous, white, tube 3.3 mm long, lobes 5, 1.5 x 0.6 mm. Seeds (cypselae) 1.7-3 x 0.4-0.5 mm, narrow-cylindric, brown, 5-6-ribbed, glabrous to sparsely hairy; pappus 3.5-4.5 mm, cream, finely scabrid.

SIMILAR TAXA

None. Well marked by the small tree habit, very large leaves with red-brown undersides, and the large number of involucral bracts. This last character it shares with *O. pachyphylla* Cheeseman, which is otherwise a much smaller shrub, with smaller leaves and capitula which have 1-3 ray florets.

FLOWERING

November to January

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

January to April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult except in damp cool climates. Can be grown from semi-hardwood cuttings and fresh seed. Very susceptible to phytophthora and verticillium wilt, and so prone to sudden collapse in gardens located within warm or humid climates.

THREATS

Severely threatened by animal browse, especially as this species is known from only four very small populations located within vulnerable ridges crests frequented by feral goats, cattle, horses and possums. Despite ongoing wild animal control, this species remains very vulnerable to even small numbers of these animals.

ETYMOLOGY

olearia: Named after Johann Gottfried Olearius, a 17th-century German scholar, writer of hymns and author of *Specimen Florae Hallensis*

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for the NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April (2006). Description by P.B Heenan (adapted from Heenan & Cameron 2002) and subsequently published in de Lange et al. (2010).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R. & Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: *Threatened Plants of New Zealand*. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch.
Heenan, P.B. & Cameron, E.K. 2002: A new species of *Olearia* from Waima Forest, Northland, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 40(4): 535-542.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/olearia-crebra/>