

Pimelea cryptica

COMMON NAME

pimelea

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2011)

FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY

Pimelea cryptica C.J.Burrows et Enright

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 72$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Data Deficient

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUS

2009 | Data Deficient

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low shrub with greyish hairy twigs bearing narrow leaves that have a few very small hairs at tip (lens needed), clusters of hairy white flowers and orange fruit inhabiting coastal greywacke outcrops around Wellington to Wairarapa south coast. Leaves often curved down, 6-10mm long by 2-2.5mm wide.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Wellington coastline from Pukerua Bay south and east to Cape Turakirae, also Wellington Harbour on Matiu/Somes and Makaro/Ward Islands). Similar plants occur between Ngawi and Cape Palliser and these warrant further study.

HABITAT

Coastal. On exposed greywacke (arenite) outcrops, rock stacks and cliff faces, usually in sparsely vegetated sites.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect, suberect, appressed to decumbent, sparsely to much-branched, shrub up to 350 mm tall (usually much smaller). Branching mainly sympodial, young stems light brown, moderately densely clad in short, appressed grey-white hairs. Internodes 1.0-1.3 mm long. Node buttresses lunate, smooth, brown, 0.2 mm, moderately prominent on leafless stems; older stems medium brown to grey. Leaves decussate, ascendant, soon becoming patent, sometimes deflexed, on short (0.2 mm), often reddish petioles. Lamina 6.0-10.0 × 2.0-2.5 mm, medium glaucous-green, narrow elliptic to narrow-ovate, sometimes obovate, flat to slightly keeled, margin upturned, mid-vein evident; tip acute but with blunt point; base cuneate; abaxial surface with very few hairs near tip, older leaves usually glabrous; stomata on both adaxial and abaxial surfaces. Inflorescences terminal, 4-8-flowered. Involucral bracts 4, the same size as ordinary leaves or slightly broader (6-3 mm). Receptacles with relatively sparse, short hairs. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white, on short (0.3 mm) pedicels, moderately hairy outside; inside hairless. Female tube 2.2 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm, calyx lobes 1.5 × 0.6 mm. Hermaphrodite tube 5 mm long, ovary portion 1.5 mm, calyx lobes 2.2 × 1.5 mm. Anther dehiscence introrse. Ovary with cluster of long hairs at summit. Fruits broad-ovoid, fleshy, pink 7.0 × 4.5 mm. Seeds ovoid 3.2 × 1.7 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Pimelea cryptica is distinguished from *Pimelea oreophila* by its upright habit, very sparse abaxial leaf hair and pink fruits, and distinctive chromosome number ($2n = 72$ cf. $2n = 36$ in *P. oreophila* subsp. *oreophila*). It differs from the eastern South Island (southeastern Marlborough and Canterbury) endemic *P. declivis* by its smaller size, very sparse leaf hair and fruit colour and apparent restriction to coastal greywacke (arenite) rock.

FLOWERING

October - May

FRUITING

Unknown

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from seed and cuttings. An unusual and rather attractive plant for a small garden, rockery or planted in a pot.

THREATS

Burrows (2011) notes *Pimelea cryptica* is seriously threatened and close to extinction in the wild. Unfortunately the basis for these statements were not given and the species was not assessed by Burrows using the New Zealand Threat Classification Manual (Townsend et al. 2008). Therefore, it has no valid threat assessment. Burrows (2011) inexplicably omits several additional collections of this species that were made from secure sites on islands within Wellington Harbour, and also from elsewhere along the Wellington - northern Cook Strait coastline. Plants that are probably *Pimelea cryptica* are also present along the western coast of Kapiti Island, and along the Cape Palliser coastline. Therefore at this stage an interim threat assessment of "Data Deficient" is probably appropriate.

ETYMOLOGY

pimelea: *Pimeleoides* means "resembling *Pimelea*", a genus in the family Thymelaeaceae (Greek, -oides = resembling, like).

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange (30 April 2011) adapted from Burrows (2011).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Burrows, C.J. 2011: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 4. The taxonomic treatment of ten endemic abaxially hairy-leaved species. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 49: 41-106.

Townsend, A.J.; de Lange, P.J.; Norton, D.A.; Molloy, J.; Miskelly, C.; Duffy, C. 2008: The New Zealand Threat Classification System manual. Wellington, Department of Conservation

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-cryptica/>