

Pimelea oreophila subsp. lepta

COMMON NAME

pimelea

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2011)

FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY

Pimelea oreophila subsp. *lepta* C.J.Burrows

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Data Deficient

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Low-growing spreading shrub with hairy branches to 50cm bearing pairs of narrow pointed leaves that are hairy underneath and with a small bump at the tip (lens needed) and with hairy white flowers and red or orange fruit inhabiting the southeastern South Island. Leaves 4-8mm long by 2-4mm wide.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (southern Canterbury, north, east and central Otago, Southland, eastern Fiordland)

HABITAT

Montane to alpine. In tall and short tussock grassland, open shrubland and on peat along bog margins. Mainly associated with schist substrates but also on sandstone, plutonics, ultramafics, limestone.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Procumbent, trailing shrub, with few to many, slender (2.0–2.5 mm), brown, flexible young stems densely covered in long, fine hairs, internodes 2–4 mm, node buttresses lunate, or extending the whole length of the internodes, with hairy strips between, sometimes moderately prominent on leafless stems. Older stems dark brown, up to 3 mm diameter, up to 500 mm long, occasionally with adventitious roots, sometimes climbing in upright shrubs. Reduced in stature on exposed sites with rocky substrates, sometimes forming short-stemmed, appressed rosettes. Branching mainly sympodial. Young stems brown, moderately densely covered in short or moderately long, white, grey or sometimes yellowish appressed hair cover; older stems darker brown, glabrate. Internodes of young stems 1–5 mm long. Node buttresses lunate to elongate, or sometimes extending the full length of internodes, with bands of hair between; usually not very prominent on leafless stems. Leaves decussate, on short (0.5–1.0 mm), often red petioles, ascending at first, usually becoming patent, often with a distichous appearance on prostrate stems. Lamina 4–8 × 2–4 mm, glaucous or medium to dark green, elliptic or ovate flat or keeled, mid-vein evident; tip acute but usually blunt-pointed, sometimes obtuse; base cuneate; abaxial hairs long, dull white to yellowish, usually moderately dense especially at margins and forming a distinct coma at the tip, often becoming glabrous as leaves age; stomata on both adaxial and abaxial surfaces. Inflorescences terminal, 5–15-flowered, receptacle densely covered in short hairs. Involucral bracts 4, the same size as ordinary leaves, or larger (6 × 4 mm). Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white, fragrant, on short pedicels (0.3 mm) densely covered with short hairs outside; inside hairless. Female tube 2.5–4.0 mm long, ovary portion 3 mm, calyx lobes 1–2 × 1 mm; hermaphrodite tube 4–6 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm, calyx lobes 2.0–3.0 × 1.5–2.0 mm. Anther dehiscence introrse. Ovary with dense clump of short or long hairs at summit. Fruits ovoid, fleshy, orange or red, 4 × 3 mm. Seeds ovoid 2.7 × 2.3 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from the other subspecies of *Pimelea oreophila* by the short or long leaves whose abaxial surface is either moderately densely covered in long hairs and by the consistent presence of an apical coma. *Pimelea oreophila* subsp. *lepta* is also recognised in the field by its geographic restriction to Southland, Otago (east of the lakes), and southern Canterbury (where it is scarce).

FLOWERING

September - February

FRUITING

October - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from semi-hardwood and hardwood cuttings. Does best in a well drained soil and planted in a sunny situation (such as in a rockery or pot)

THREATS

Probably not threatened. However as *Pimelea oreophila* subsp. *lepta* was not assessed by Burrows (2011) using the New Zealand Threat Classification Manual (Townsend et al. 2008) it has no valid threat assessment. So at this stage it seems best to recommend a interim threat assessment of "Data Deficient".

ETYMOLOGY

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

oreophila: Mountain lover

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (28 April 2011). Description 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 oreophila* subsp. *lepta* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-oreophila-subsp-lepta/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-oreophila-subsp-lepta/>