

# Senecio australis

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Asteraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Senecio australis* Willd.

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 80

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

2009 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

2004 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Herbaceous, short-lived or annual daisy. Leaves fleshy, dark green, variable (obovate, oblanceolate, lanceolate) deeply lobed or coarsely toothed. Flower heads (capitula) vase-shaped, involucre bracts 9-15, 5-6 mm long, ligules yellow, 1-5 × 1 mm, disc yellow, 4-5 mm diameter. Seeds 2.5-2.8 × 0.3-0.5 mm.

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. Present on Motukino (Fanal Island), Mokohinau Islands and North Eastern Great Barrier Island. Otherwise only known from the Norfolk Island group

## HABITAT

In New Zealand. Offshore islands on rock ledges, in short grasses and coastal herbs growing amongst petrel and diving petrel burrows



Plant in cultivation, Motukino (Fanal) Island (Oratia Native Plant Nurseries). Photographer: Peter J. de Lange, Date taken: 11/11/2006, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Achenes. In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 10/08/2007, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Erect to semi-erect, heavily branched and leafy, short-lived perennial herb, (0.2-)0.8-1 m tall. Stems dark purple. Foliage dark green, glabrescent and fleshy. Lower leaves 55-75 × 25-30 mm, dark green, shortly-petiolate, obovate to oblanceolate, entire, very rarely lobed 1-2 times, apex obtuse; mid-cauline leaves 50-140 × 20-45 mm, dark green, petiolate or amplexicaul, petioles up to 10-15 mm; lamina ovate, obovate to elliptic, rarely rhomboidal, entire, coarsely dentate, or lobed 2-3 times, leaf apices obtuse; uppermost leaves smaller, lanceolate to linear or linear-spathulate, lobulate or dentate, with obtuse apices. Inflorescence a lax cyme of 3-8 capitula. Capitula urceolate. Involucral bracts (9-)13(-15), dark green, lanceolate, 5-6 mm long. Ray florets (0-)9(-12); ligules yellow, 1-5 × 1 mm; blunt-ended. Disc 4-5 mm diameter, yellow. Cypsela elliptic to oblong-elliptic 2.5-2.8 × 0.3-0.5 mm.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Senecio marotiri* is superficially similar. From that species *S. australis* can be distinguished by its basal leaves which are lyrate-lobed, cob-webby arachnoid stem, leaf and involucral hairs, urceolate (vase-shaped) capitula, shorter and fewer involucral bracts, and shorter cypsela (seeds). It has a very different nrDNA ITS sequence placing it within the lautusoid *Senecio* group, whilst *S. marotiri* is the sister species of *S. quadridentatus*.

## FLOWERING

November - April

## FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

## FRUITING

November - April

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed. A short-lived perennial which readily self sows in suitable habitats. Does best in a sunny, exposed location, within free draining fertile soil.

## THREATS

In New Zealand it is known from only three small populations comprising a total of 10 or so plants. It is clearly a recent arrival at these locations and during these initial stages of colonisation it remains vulnerable to a range of natural stochastic events. This species is abundant and not threatened on Norfolk Island.

## ETYMOLOGY

**senecio**: From the Latin *senex* 'old man' (probably referring to the bearded seeds)

**australis**: Southern

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (3 May 2004). Description by P.J. de Lange based on New Zealand material originally from Motukino ( Fanal Island), Mokohinau Islands group.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/senecio-australis/>