Leptinella conjuncta

Current Threat Status (2012):
Threatened - Nationally Critical

Distribution:
Endemic. South I. Central Otago (the catchments of the Clutha, Nevis, and Manuherikia rivers), and southern Canterbury (Mackenzie Basin).

Habitat:
Inner montane basins and river terraces. Known from dry, semi-arid and rain-shadow areas where it predominantly grows on terraces, terrace edges, and old river channels of gravels and alluvium.

Features*:
Creeping perennial herb forming small open patches. Branches in clusters of up to 4 radiating from a flowering node. Leaves 1-pinnatifid, pectinate, 6–20 × 2–5mm, blade elliptic or obovate, coriaceous, moderately to densely villous, dark green to brown-green; pinnae in 5–12 pairs, 1.0–2.5 × 0.3–0.5mm, oblong, obovate or linear, apex obtuse to subacute, margin entire, terminal pinna and distal 1–3 pairs of pinnae usually joined together. Peduncles longer than leaves, 20–100mm long, 0.4–0.6mm diameter, sparsely to densely villous. Monoecious, capitula up to 5mm diameter. Involucre with phyllaries 12–24 in 2 or more subequal rows, oblong, dark green or grey-green, with 1–3 dark veins sometimes obscured by sparse to dense hairs, margin wide, brown, scarious. Pistillate florets 12–24, in 1 row; 2.0–2.7mm long, white, cream or translucent, with 1–2 dark longitudinal stripes along corolla and ovary; corolla 1.0–1.1 × 0.5–0.6mm, lobes 4–5, each 0.1–0.2mm long; ovary 1.0–1.2 × 0.4–0.5mm, style c. 1.2mm long, stigmatic arms 0.1–0.15mm long. Staminate florets 20–50, in 3–5 rows, 2.5–2.9mm long, white, cream or translucent, often with 1–2 dark stripes along corolla and ovary, corolla with scattered sessile glandular trichomes; corolla tube 1.2–1.4 × 0.3–0.35mm, partially translucent to white; inflated corolla 0.7–0.9 × 0.9–1.0mm, translucent; corolla lobes 4–5, 0.5–0.6mm long, white, triangular, patent; ovary 0.7–0.8 × 0.25–0.35mm; stigma c. 0.2 mm diameter; filaments 1.0–1.2mm long, partially translucent to white; anthers 0.7–0.8mm long, yellow. Achenes up to 2.1 × 0.7mm, ± compressed, biconvex, golden-brown, scarcely to deeply wrinkled.

Flowering: October – April  
Fruiting: October – May

Threats:
The main threats to Leptinella conjuncta are habitat modification for horticultural and agricultural purposes and competition from naturalised species. The small size of most populations means that with disturbance the species could easily be lost from a particular place. The 2004 status shown above is taken from de Lange et al. (2004) in which the taxon was listed as as the undescribed species - Leptinella (a) (CHR 515297; Clutha River).

*Attribution:
Description from: Heenan (2009).

References and further reading:

For more information, visit: http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2384