Pimelea aridula subsp. oliga

COMMON NAME
pimelea

FAMILY
Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY
Pimelea aridula subsp. oliga 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 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DP, RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2012 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DP, RR, Sp
2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DP, RR

BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Bushy small shrub with pairs of greyish hairy narrow pointed leaves inhabiting very dry rocky sites in Marlborough. Twigs hairy, flexible. Leaves 6-15mm long by 2-3mm wide, widest at base, pointed, hairy on both surfaces. Flowers white, in clusters. Fruit dry, enclosing black seed.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. South Island: Eastern Marlborough, relatively close to the coast in the Flaxbourne River and Wharekiri Stream catchments. Further inland in the Awatere Valley, Chalk Range and middle Clarence Valley (West of the Seaward Kaikoura Range)

HABITAT
Lowland to montane. On limestone outcrops and screes (occasionally on sandstone)

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
A medium-sized, slender upright shrub, up to 0.7 m. Long-stemmed plants may be fastigiate; short-stemmed plants often have more divergent branches. Branching mainly sympodial. Main stems flexible. Young branchlets brown, moderately to densely covered with long hair; internodes 0.5-2.0 mm; old stems at the base may be stout (= 10 mm diameter), grey-brown, glabrous. Node buttresses lunate, brown, hairy, often masked by hairs on young stems, moderately conspicuous on leafless stems. Leaves usually decussate, on short, red petioles (0.5 mm), rarely alternate on some young branchlets, ascending, loosely imbricate. Lamina 6-15 × 2-3 mm, medium green, slightly adaxially concave, narrow-ovate, acute, base cuneate, both surfaces sparsely to moderately densely covered by appressed white sericeous to villous hairs, comose at tip. Stomata on both leaf surfaces. Inflorescences terminal, 5-10-flowered, sometimes in small clusters. Involucral bracts similar in size to adjacent leaves or slightly wider (8.0-10 × 3.2 mm), partly hiding the flowers. Receptacle densely hairy. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white, on short pedicels (0.5 mm), densely hairy outside, internally glabrous. Female tube 3.0 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm, calyx lobes 1.3 × 0.7 mm; hermaphrodite tube 6.0 mm long, ovary portion 2.5 mm, calyx lobes 2.0 × 1.3 mm. Anther dehiscence introrse. Ovary hairy from summit to two thirds of the way down. Fruits ovoid, dry, brown, 4.0 × 2.3 mm. Seeds ovoid 3.0-4.0 × 1.9-2.1 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA
Pimelea aridula subsp. oliga is most likely to be confused with P. concinna, a species with which it is sometimes sympatric. Both Pimelea form relatively tall shrubs with mostly upright growth habits. From Pimelea concinna, P. aridula subsp. oliga can be distinguished by the leaves which are 8-12 mm rather than 5-8 mm long. Pimelea aridula subsp. oliga differs from subsp. aridula by its allopatric distibution (being geographically confined to Marlborough) and vegetatively by shorter growth habit with notably more slender, flexible stems, and by the narrow-elliptic to narrow-ovate leaves whose surfaces are usually sparsely to moderately invested by long sericeous to villous white hairs.

FLOWERING
October - January

FLOWER COLOURS
White

FRUITING
December - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from semi-hardwood cuttings. Does best in a free draining, sunny site, planted within a rich. fertile soil. Dislikes competition from taller plants and humidity. Will not long tolerate being shaded out. An excellent pot plant or small shrub for a rockery.

THREATS
Pimelea aridula subsp. oliga is listed in Appendix 2 of de Lange et al. (2011; p.90) as Pimelea aff. aridula (CHR 277514; South Marlborough). Burrows (2011) offers no data to support or refute that status, though he does indicate this subspecies is highly threatened, citing farming as a major threat through causing a of loss of habitat. Burrows (2011) also provides data to suggest that introgression with other Pimelea may be a threat. This needs to be properly studied. At this stage because Pimelea aridula subsp. olga has a valid threat status, until a further listing is undertaken there seems no reason to change this.

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

WHERE TO BUY
Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (30 September 2011): Description based on Burrows (2011)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Burrows, C.J. 2011: Genus Pimelea (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 5. The taxonomic treatment of five endemic species with both adaxial and abaxial leaf hair. New Zealand Journal of Botany 49: 367-412.
de Lange, P.J.; Norton, D.A.; Courtney, S.P.; Heenan, P.B.; Barkla, J.W.; Cameron, E.K.; Hitchmough, R.; Townsend, A.J. 2009: Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand (2008 revision). New Zealand Journal of Botany 47: 61-96.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION
Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): Pimelea aridula subsp. oliga Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-aridula-subsp-oliga/ (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-aridula-subsp-oliga/