

Pimelea longifolia

COMMON NAME

long-leaved pimelea

SYNONYMS

Passerina longifolia Sol. ex Thunb.

FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY

Pimelea longifolia Sol. ex Wikstr.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

PIMLON

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: PD

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: PD

2009 | Data Deficient

2004 | Not Threatened

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Shrub to 2m tall with reddish twigs bearing pairs of bright green pointed leaves and hairy white flowers inhabiting lowland areas from Auckland to Greymouth. Leaves 40-110mm long by 10-22mm wide. Flowers to 10mm long. Fruit dry, enclosing black seed.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: Great Barrier, North (Coromandel Peninsula, Auckland, Kaimai Range, East Cape, Te Urewera and Tararua Ranges) and South Islands (Durville Island, Marlborough Sounds, north-west Nelson, Buller and Paparoa Ranges)

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Usually in open sites in forest, on forest margins and in scrub; on or near rock outcrops (especially base-rich rock such as limestone and basalt – but also on acidic rocks such as rhyolite).



Upper Kauaerenga River. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



In cultivation ex Waitakere. Jul 2007. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A much-branched, erect shrub up to 2 m tall. Branches and branchlets ascending, glabrous except at leaf axils and on receptacles. Node buttresses occupy whole internode, smooth, brown, sometimes prominent after leaf fall on small specimens; internodes 8–14 mm long. Bark ages to grey. Leaves decussate, in distant opposite pairs, ascending to patent or deflexed, on petioles 3–5 mm long. Lamina medium green, yellow-green to dark green, stiff, somewhat leathery, very variable in size and shape on the same plant; largest 40–110 × 10–22 mm, elliptic or ovate, sometimes obovate, oblong or lanceolate; flat, acuminate, base cuneate. Margins slightly thickened and down-turned; midvein prominent abaxially, sunken above; lateral vein pattern camptodromous; stomata on undersides only. Inflorescences many-flowered; pedicels 1–2 mm long, persistent. Involucral bracts four, smaller than or sometimes the same size as largest ordinary leaves (20–40 × 8–10 mm). Plants gynodioecious. Flowers hairy on outside; inside hairless; fragrant, white, flushed rose or completely pink, lower tube often red. Calyx lobes open in salverform fashion. Female tube to 10 mm long, ovary portion 4 mm, calyx lobes 3.2 × 1.8 mm; staminodes short, at mouth of tube. Female tube to 15 mm long, ovary portion 3.5 mm, calyx lobes 5 × 2.5 mm. Anther filaments long, inserted at mouth of tube; anthers yellow. Ovary densely hairy at summit. Fruits ovoid, green, drying brown, 5 mm long. Seeds narrow ovoid, 4.0 × 1.8 mm. Dried hypanthia persistent often dispersing with fruits inside.

SIMILAR TAXA

Very close to *P. gnidia* (it could be considered as a mostly lowland form of that species) from which it differs by its longer leaves, longer flowers and preference for mostly coastal to lowland habitats. *Pimelea gnidia* is only coastal in the southern part of its range where *P. longifolia* is not known. Both species are said to frequently hybridise (see Burrows 2008).

FLOWERING

September – April

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

November – June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Fickle. Can be grown from cuttings, and occasionally seed germinates in garden conditions. Does best in full sun on a well drained soil. However, even well established plants are prone to sudden collapse.

ETYMOLOGY

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

longifolia: Long leaf

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Burrows (2008).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Burrows, C.J. 2008: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 1. The taxonomic treatment of seven endemic, glabrous-leaved species. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 46: 127-176.

MORE INFORMATION

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