

Acaena anserinifolia

COMMON NAME

bidibid, hutiwai, piri-piri

SYNONYMS

Acaena pusilla (Bitter) Allan var. *pusilla*, *A. pusilla* var. *suprasericascens* Bitter, *Acaena viridior* (Cockayne) Allan. The names *A. anserinifolia* var. *sericeinitens* (Bitter) Allan and var. *paucidens*, are referable to *A. profundeincisa* (Bitter) B.Macmillan.

FAMILY

Rosaceae

AUTHORITY

Acaena anserinifolia (J.R.Forst. et G.Forst.) J.B.Armstr.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

ACAANS

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Found throughout the North, South, Stewart, and Chatham Islands. Naturalised on the Auckland and Campbell Islands.

HABITAT

Abundant from lowland to lower subalpine forest margins and in shrublands.

FEATURES

Stoloniferous, prostrate, trailing and perennial herb, forming diffuse to dense patches up to 1 m diam. Prostrate stems 1-1.5 mm diam. and < 1 m long, erect stems 1-1.5 mm diam., < 150 mm long (unless scrambling up through surrounding vegetation, in which case taller). Leaves 10-75 mm long, stipules 3-8-fid, leaflets 9-13, oblong, 4-17 x 2-9 mm, 7-15-toothed to base, dull green to yellow-green, basal leaves often mottled brown, upper surface sparsely to densely hairy, undersides paler, glaucescent to silvery, and very silky hairy, teeth tipped with a tuft of brush-like hairs. Inflorescence scape 40-120 mm long, covered in long, appressed hairs. Capitulum 5-8 mm diam. at flowering, 10-20 mm diam. (including spines) at fruiting; florets c. 50-60; sepals 4; stamens 2; anthers white or rose; style 1; white; achene 1. Fruit obconic, 3 x 12 mm, hairy, spines 4, pale brown, 4-9 mm long, barbed.



Hooker Valley, December. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Acaena anserinifolia. Photographer: John Barkla

SIMILAR TAXA

Often grows with *Acaena novae-zelandiae* but can be recognised by the distinctive tuft of brush-like hairs surmounting the leaf teeth apices. Undersides of leaves are distinctly silvery due to dense covering of appressed silky hairs. *A. juvenca* and *A. emittens* are closely related. Both can be easily recognised by their very gracile, slender, stems, rather diffuse foliage, by the distal 3-5 leaflets obovate and larger than the basal leaflets, and by the usually entire stipules.

FLOWERING

October - January

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

December - April

LIFE CYCLE

Spiny hypanthia are dispersed by attaching to fur, feathers and clothing and possibly also dispersed by wind and granivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and from rooted pieces.

ETYMOLOGY

acaena: From the Greek 'akanthos' thorn, referring to the spiny calyx that many species have

anserinifolia: With leaves like *Potentilla anserina*

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 2009 Vol. 11 No. 4 pp. 285-309

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/acaena-anserinifolia/>