

Acaena minor var. minor

COMMON NAMES

bidibid

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

An evergreen hairy silvery-green herb, which spreads up to a 1 metre across and about 15 cm in height. The pinnate leaves are delicate and toothed with hairy tips and may be folded upwards lengthways. The globe shaped flower balls are white and grow into a cluster of hooked spikes, which when ripe brown off, become firm and may stick to your socks or laces when brushed past in order to disperse. Only found on Sub-Antarctic Islands.

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Red/Pink

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Stoloniferous, prostrate, trailing perennial herb, primary stems 2-3.5 mm diameter, forming a loose mat up to 1 metre in diameter. **Stems** 1-2 mm diameter, hairy, up to 5 cm long, and/or 5-15 cm high, rooting at nodes; **Stipules** entire to trifid, densely hairy. **Leaves** odd-pinnate, less than 20 mm long with 7-15 leaflets; **Leaflets** folded length wise, longer than wide with apex half slightly wider, bright green on both surfaces, serrated toothed margin, 8-13 teeth are hair-tipped, upper surface hairless, lower surface sparsely hairy along primary and secondary veins. **Inflorescence scape** 15-20 mm, densely silky-hair covered; **Capitulum** 9-14 mm diameter of 40-50 florets, each floret has 4 sepals, 2 stamen, dark red anthers, 1 white style, 1 achene; **Fruit** roughly cone-shaped, each having 4 barb-tipped red or yellow spines, 6-12 mm long, which mature dry, pale brown when ripe, enabling attachment to passing hairy/feathered surfaces as vector, and/or to aid wind dispersal.

SIMILAR TAXA

Easily confused with *Acaena minor* var. *antarctica*, which is generally a larger plant in all components apart from the size of the capitulum which is 7-9 mm compared to 9-14 mm in *A. minor* var. *minor*.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Auckland Island and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku.

HABITAT

Montane (approximately 500 m.a.s.l.), high altitude meadows.

GENUS

Acaena



Enderby Island, Auckland Islands.

Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 05/01/2018, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mt Honey, Campbell Island. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 06/01/2018, Licence: CC BY-NC.

FAMILY

Rosaceae

AUTHORITY

Acaena minor (Hook.f.) Allan var. *minor*

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November–January

FRUITING

January–March

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ETYMOLOGY

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

minor: Smaller

NVS CODE

ACAMVM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Volume 1. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsidea, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledons. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. pg. 363.

Lloyd K. 2001. A Key and notes for *Acaena* (Rosaceae) in New Zealand. *Botanical Society of Otago Newsletter* 25. Pgs. 10-14.

Meurk CD. 1975. Contributions to the flora and plant ecology of Campbell Island. *New Zealand journal of botany*, 13(4), 721-742. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1975.10430355>

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by MD Ward (November 18th 2025). Description adapted from Lloyd (2001), Meurk (1975), Allan (1961).

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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