

Aciphylla congesta

FAMILY

Apiaceae

AUTHORITY

Aciphylla congesta Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

ACICON

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 22

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Groups of blunt-leaved small spiky green clumps with ball-like white flowers on a long fleshy stalk

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island; south Westland, western Otago, north-western Southland, Fiordland

HABITAT

High rainfall fellfield, particularly where snow accumulates and exposed sites. 1200 - 2000 m a.s.l.



Mt Burns Saddle (January). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Mt Burns, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tufted herb forming clumps to 30 cm diam. Rosettes multiple. Leaves many, soft, striate, 1-pinnate; sheath thin, with hyaline margin, to 6 cm long, tapering from 20 mm to 7 mm wide; stipules c. 6.5 cm long x 5 mm wide, linear-oblong, abruptly narrowing to acicular tip; petioles to 8 cm long, flat, sometimes vestigial; internodes (inter-pinna spacing) to 10 mm long; primary pinnae in 2-3 pairs, laminae of pinna to c. 6 cm long x 5 mm wide, abruptly narrowing to pungent apex. Male flowering stem stout, 30 cm x c. 15 mm wide; lower bract sheaths broad, to 25 x 15 mm tapering to long pungent tips; lower bract lamina and stipules leaf-like. Umbels 6-12, crowded, forming a globose head c. 12 cm diam.; primary rays stout, c. 4 cm long, +/- whorled, subtended by whorl of bracts; umbellules several, crowded, to 2 cm diam., on slender rays c. 5 mm long. Female flowering stem similar, forming a globose head to 15 cm diam.; primary rays grooved, c. 60 mm long x 3 mm wide; involucral bracts whorled; bract sheath 10 mm long x 7 mm wide, submembranous; bract stipules and lamina to 4 cm long; umbellules to 3 cm diam., rays many, crowded. Fruit of two mericarps; mericarps narrowly elliptic to elliptic, 4.0-5.2 mm, with (3-4-)5 even narrowly winged ribs, 4 low indistinct ribs on vittae, vittae largely obscured

SIMILAR TAXA

Similar to other clump forming blunt-leafed species such as *A. crosby-smithii* which has a larger sheath and wider leaflets and *A. spedeni* which has smaller simple leaves and the leaflets arranged fan-like

FLOWER COLOURS

Cream, White

LIFE CYCLE

Winged schizocarps are dispersed primarily by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

ETYMOLOGY

aciphylla: From the Latin acicula 'needle' and the Greek phyllum 'leaf', meaning needle-leaf.

congesta: Crowded

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Allan (1961), Mark and Adams (1995) and Webb and Simpson (2001).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Allan, H.H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Government Printer, Wellington
- Mark, A.F; Adams, N.M. 1995. New Zealand alpine plants, 2nd Edition. Godwit Publishing, Auckland
- 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
- Webb, C.J. & Simpson, M.J.A. 2001. Seeds of NZ gymnosperms and dicotyledons. Manuka Press, Christchurch

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/aciphylla-congesta/>