

# Aciphylla hectorii

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT

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## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small tufted plant up to approximately 25 cm tall including inflorescence.

**Leaf-sheaths** 30-50 x 8-10 mm, thin; stipules leaflike, rather rigid, 50-60 x 5 mm, oblong, abruptly narrowed to acicular apex; petioles stiff, flat, coriaceous, up to 10 mm long. **Pinnae** 1 pair, approximate to terminal leaflet 35-65 x 3-4 mm, rigid, margins finely crenulate-serrulate, abruptly narrowed to pungent apex. **Flowering stems** of male plants 20-30 cm long including dense to open inflorescence approximately 80-150 mm long. **Bract-sheaths** up to approximately 15 mm long; stipules very narrow, spreading, pungent, approximately 10 mm long; lamina up to 20 mm long. **Umbels** about 10 mm diameter, on very slender rays; umbellules very small, on filiform rays. **Flowering stems** of female plants grooved, up to 30 cm long including dense inflorescence up to 15 cm long. **Bract-sheaths** approximately 10 x 5 mm, submembranous; stipules up to 20 mm long; lamina approximately 30 mm long. **Umbels** roughly enclosed in sheaths, on short rays; umbellules small, close-set, on very short rays. **Fruit** approximately 4 mm long; mericarps 3-5 winged.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, central and western Otago, and south Westland.

## HABITAT

Higher montane to sub-alpine (1000-1800 m.a.s.l.) herbfield to snow tussock-herbfield and fellfield, favouring rock crevices.

## GENUS

Aciphylla

## FAMILY

Apiaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Aciphylla hectorii* Buchanan

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

Dawson & LeComte suggest this species is part of the group with milky juice. They also suggest two other earlier described species *A. poppelwellii* and *A. verticillata*, both of which were described from one wild specimen, may have been this species which had been growing in varied environments.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes



Pisa Range. Jan 1992. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Old Man Range. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

December - January

## FRUITING

January - March

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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.

**hectorii**: Named after Sir James Hector, 19th century New Zealand geologist and botanist who was originally from Scotland

## NVS CODE

ACIHEC

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 22

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DP

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, NS, NStr, Sp, TL Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H. H. 1961. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Wellington: Government Printer. pg. 472.

Dawson, J.W. LeComte, J.R. 1978. Research on Aciphylla - a progress report. Tuatara 23: pg. 49-67.

Mark, A. F. 2012. Above the Treeline: A Nature Guide to Alpine New Zealand. Craig Potton Publishing, Nelson. pg. 144.

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

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted by M. Ward from Allan (1961).

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## MORE INFORMATION

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

## PDF DATE

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