

Aciphylla montana var. gracilis

SYNONYMS

Aciphylla gracilis W.R.B.Oliv.

FAMILY

Apiaceae

AUTHORITY

Aciphylla montana var. gracilis (W.R.B.Oliv.) J.W.Dawson

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

NVS CODE

ACIMVG

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island very localised, east of the main distribution of *A. montana* J.F.Armstr. var. *montana*, confined to south Canterbury and northern Otago in the Hawkdon, Kirkliston and St Bathans Ranges and near Lake Ohau.

HABITAT

Alpine (1200–1600 m a.s.l.) in tall tussock grassland, rarely near rock outcrops.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Rosettes up to 5 per plant, each up to 250 mm diameter. Leaves coriaceous, yellow-green, up to 230 mm long, with 2(-3) leaflets, usually in one plane; sheath 80 x 5-15 mm, sheath joint obscure; stipules up to 70 x 1 mm, shorter than to almost as long as the petiole; petiole up to 90 x 3 mm, more or less convex above, margins rounded, pulvinus evident, up to 12 mm long, lamina more or less obtriangular in outline, lowermost leaflet up to 130 x 2.5-4 mm, apex acute, spine 2 mm long, midrib obscure, marginrib 0.2 mm wide, veins not raised. Inflorescences narrow. Female inflorescence up to 400 mm long, with a stem 490 x 11 mm, yellow-orange; head 140 x 30 mm, more or less lanceolate in outline; compound umbels 20-25, arranged in 5-7 whorls, the terminal umbel smaller than the lower laterals; lower bracts 80 mm long, with a sheath up to 35 x 9 mm, stipules and 1-2 pairs of leaflets; upper bracts smaller and simple with stipules. Lower compound umbels up to 35 mm long with peduncles up to 20 x 2 mm, occasionally sessile, primary bracteoles minute, simple umbels up to 6 with peduncles up to 12 x 0.7 mm, the innermost umbels sessile; secondary bracteoles simple, 7 x 1 mm; up to 15 flowers per umbel, pedicels up to 2.5 x 0.2 mm. Sepals up to 0.3 mm; petals up to 1 x 0.5 mm, not inflexed; staminodes up to 0.5 mm long. Male inflorescences up to 520 mm, stem 270 x 12 mm, yellow-orange; head 260 x 80 mm, lanceolate in outline; compound umbels up to 38, in 5-7 whorls, the terminal umbel smaller than the lower laterals; bracts similar to those of the female; lower compound umbels up to 80 mm long, usually as a whorl of 2 simple umbels on the peduncles, this up to 70 x 2 mm; up to 13 simple umbels with peduncles 12 x 0.4 mm, bearing up to 15 flowers per umbel, pedicels 2 x 0.1 mm. Sepals 0.3 mm; petals 1.2 x 0.8 mm, not inflexed; stamens up to 2 mm long. Mericarps 4.5 x 0.5 mm, dull pale brown, lateral ribs < 0.5 mm wide; style up to 1.2 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Aciphylla montana J.F.Armstr. var. *montana* is very similar (if not conspecific) it differs chiefly by its larger stature, with plants forming rosettes of 25 or more (rather than 5 or less), leaves up to 300 rather than 230 mm long, and by the female inflorescences being up to 600 rather than 400 mm tall. In *A. montana* var. *montana* there are usually 3 but sometimes 4 leaflet pairs, while var. *gracilis* usually has 2 pairs of leaflets.

FLOWERING

December - March

FLOWER COLOURS

Orange, Yellow

FRUITING

January - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - requires specialist curation within an alpine house or in pots. Best in a climate prone to very cold winters and dry but cool summers. Requires free draining soils and full sun, in a moderately fertile substrate. Resents humidity and will not flower unless subject to cold treatment.

THREATS

Does not appear to be under any serious threat, rather this is a narrow-range endemic, locally common within its few known habitats. It may be threatened by browsing animals at some more accessible sites.

ETYMOLOGY

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

montana: From the Latin *mons* 'mountain', meaning growing on mountains

gracilis: Slender

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 28 May 2006: Description adapted from Dawson (1979).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Dawson, J. W. 1979: *Aciphylla montana* Armstrong, *A. lecomtei* sp. nov., and related species. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 17: 339-351.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/aciphylla-montana-var-gracilis/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/aciphylla-montana-var-gracilis/>