

# Centipeda elatinoidea

## COMMON NAMES

sneezeweed, snuff weed

## BIOSTATUS

Native

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Prostrate annual to perennial herb, all parts glabrous to glabrescent, usually with short arachnoid hairs near growing tips; branches spreading, up to 300 mm long, rooting from lower nodes. **Leaves** alternate, obovate to narrowly obovate, 6–20 × 2.5–8 mm, glaucous green to green, margins entire or finely crenate, resin-dotted. Inflorescence a single, shortly pedunculate, leaf opposed capitulum. **Peduncle** 0.5–3 mm long. **Capitula** at flowering biconvex to hemispherical, 3–5 mm diameter, involucre bracts 1–2-seriate, obovate, 1–1.5 mm long; receptacle convex; female (outer) florets 40–80, in 2–4 rows, cylindrical, 0.2–0.4 mm, green or yellow-green; bisexual (inner) florets 4–14, obconic, 0.5–0.7 mm, purplish. **Fruiting head** disarticulating before stem senescence. **Cypselas** of female and bisexual florets similar, narrowly obovate, 1.2–2 mm, obtuse at apex, flattened, 3–4-angled in section, ribs clothed with antrorse appressed hairs, pericarp slightly thickened at or close to apex.

## SIMILAR TAXA

In New Zealand *C. elatinoidea* has been confused with *C. cunninghamii*, *C. aotearoana*, and *C. minima* subsp. *minima*. However, it is most frequently confused with *C. minima* subsp. *minima* from which it differs by its larger foliage, capitula, cypselas and usually perennial habit. The presence of fine arachnoid hairs toward the branch apices is also rather diagnostic of this species.

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island, South Island. Exact distribution unclear as this species has been recognised in New Zealand only since 2001. Present in Australia and Chile (South America)

## HABITAT

Coastal to lowland (0–300 m a.s.l.). Usually on recently exposed muddy ground on seasonally inundated sites, e.g., shallow lake and lake margins, ephemeral ponds, river and stream banks and in seepages.

## GENUS

Centipeda

## FAMILY

Asteraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Centipeda elatinoidea* (Less.) Benth. et Hook. ex O.Hoffm.

## SYNONYMS

*Myriogyne elatinoidea* Less, *Cotula foetida* Peopp. ex DC., *Centipeda orbicularis* var. *sternutatoria* (Roxb.) Bailey



## TAXONOMIC NOTES

Collectively the four species now recognised from New Zealand were all regarded by Allan (1961) as *C. orbicularis*, a later synonym of *C. minima*. Webb et al. (1988) were the first to recognise *C. minima* and *C. cunninghamii* as present in New Zealand. However they regarded *C. cunninghamii* as introduced. NZPCN does not because it is just as likely it arrived naturally in New Zealand via water fowl. *C. elatinooides* could also be regarded as introduced but this too seems unlikely for much the same reasons.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

September–May

## FRUITING

October–July

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Cypselae dispersed by wind, attachment and granivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from rooted pieces and fresh seed. Rather invasive but ideal as a ground cover on poorly draining but exposed ground. The foliage is pleasantly aromatic.

## WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACW: Facultative Wetland

Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

## ETYMOLOGY

**centipeda:** From the Greek word for one hundred feet

**elatinooides:** Resembling Elatine - a superficially similar plant of wetlands and fresh water bodies

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 20$

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: SO

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Data Deficient | Qualifiers: SO Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland”](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- 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. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.
- Walsh NG. 2001. A revision of *Centipeda* (Asteraceae). *Muelleria* 15: 33–64.  
<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/207394#page/35/mode/1up>.
- Webb CJ, Sykes WR, Garnock-Jones PJ. 1988. Flora of New Zealand, Volume IV. Naturalised Pteridophytes, Gymnosperms, Dicotyledons. Botany Division, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Christchurch, NZ. 1365 p.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 5 May 2005. Description adapted from Walsh (2001).

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/centipeda-elatinoides/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026