

Centrolepis minima

COMMON NAMES

centrolepis

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Dp

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Annual, rather gracile and fine-leaved, loosely tufted, often partially or fully submerged herbs forming diffuse patches up to 20 mm high in fine sand and silt. **Roots** numerous, fine, > upper part of plant. **Leaves** 5–20 mm long, < 0.5 mm. wide, green or wine-red, crowded at stem base; sheaths transparent, glabrous, slightly wider than lamina. **Flowering stems** slightly < leaves, c. 0.5 mm wide, bright red. **Glume-like bracts** 2, ± opposite, ovate, papillose, the outer mucronate, almost completely enclosing the smaller obtuse one; each bract enclosing 1, rarely 2 pseudanthia; hyaline scales 0. **Male flower** 1 or 0 in a pseudanthium, usually only 1 within each glume-like bract. **Female flowers** 2–6, superposed in 2 series; styles connate at the base.

SIMILAR TAXA

Recognised by the diffuse, tufted rather than cushion forming, annual rather than perennial growth habit and very fine, gracile, green or wine red, densely crowded glabrous leaves. Plants are easily overlooked as they are usually buried in sand or silt such that only the leaf tips are visible.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (Westland, Canterbury, Southland, Fiordland).

HABITAT

Lowland to subalpine. Aquatic or semi-aquatic, usually partially buried such that only the leaf tips are visible in fine sand and silt along the margin of lakes and small tarns.

THREATS

A Naturally Uncommon, sparsely distributed, range-restricted endemic. There are no obvious threats though potentially it is threatened by introduced aquatic weeds at some sites.

GENUS

Centrolepis

FAMILY

Restionaceae

AUTHORITY

Centrolepis minima Kirk

SYNONYMS

Gaimardia minima (Kirk) Cheeseman; *Pseudalepyrum minimum* (Kirk) Dandy

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Centrolepis was formerly in the family Centrolepidaceae, which was shown by Briggs et al. (2014) to be embedded within Restionaceae. Based on these findings, the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group adopted an enlarged concept of Restionaceae that included Centrolepidaceae (APG IV 2016), which is followed by NZPCN.



ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

January–March

FRUITING

March–April

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

centrolepis: Pointed scale

minima: Very small

NVS CODE

CENMNM

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Data Deficient | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT 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.

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Data Deficient | Qualifiers: 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

Angiosperm Phylogeny Group. 2016. An update of the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group classification for the orders and families of flowering plants: APG IV. *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society* 181: 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/boj.12385>.

Briggs BG, Marchant AD, Perkins AJ. 2014. Phylogeny of the restiid clade (Poales) and implications for the classification of Anarthriaceae, Centrolepidaceae and Australian Restionaceae. *Taxon* 63: 24–46. <https://doi.org/10.12705/631.1>.

Moore LB, Edgar E. 1970. Flora of New Zealand, Volume II. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Monocotyledones except Gramineae. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 354 p.

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 P.J. de Lange 14 August 2006. Description adapted from Moore & Edgar (1970) Some of this factsheet information is derived from [Flora of New Zealand Online](#) and is used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand](#) licence.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/centrolepis-minima/>

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