

Centrolepis pallida

COMMON NAMES

centrolepis

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Dense, pale or bright green, moss-like cushions. **Roots** comparatively thick, but < 0.5 mm diameter **Stems** 15–40 mm long. **Leaves** 6–9 mm long, < 0.5 mm. wide, distichous, equitant at the base, closely imbricate up the stem, lamina stiff, erect, glabrous, subulate, laterally compressed or occasionally channelled, narrowed to an acute or occasionally shortly acicular tip; leaf-sheaths c. ½ length of lamina, very pale cream, membranous, without ligule or auricles. **Flowering stems** about equal leaves in length. **Floral bracts** 2, ± opposite, unequal in length, the lower larger. **Pseudanthia**, 1 in each floral bract, or 1 bract without pseudanthium; male 1 only, in the lowermost pseudanthium, at maturity the filament elongated excessively and the anther far exerted; female 1–3–(4) in each pseudanthium; hyaline scales 0. **Seed** ± 0.5 mm long, oblong-obovate, apiculate at one end.

SIMILAR TAXA

Recognised by the pale or bright green, moss-like, cushion forming, perennial rather than annual growth habit and pale or bright green, densely imbricating glabrous leaves.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Central Volcanic Plateau, and Ruahine Range), South Island (Otago, Southland and Fiordland), Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku.

HABITAT

Montane to alpine in bogs descending to near sea level in the Subantarctic islands.

GENUS

Centrolepis

FAMILY

Restionaceae

AUTHORITY

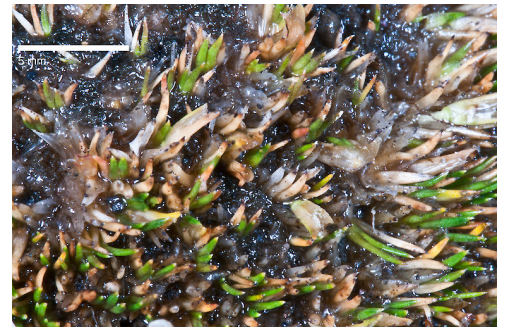
Centrolepis pallida (Hook.f.) Cheeseman

SYNONYMS

Gaimardia pallida Hook.f.; *Alepyrum pallidum* (Hook.f.) Hook.f.; *Pseudalepyrum pallidum* (Hook.f.) Dandy; *Centrolepis minima* Kirk



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Mount Ruapehu. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 09/02/2012, Licence: CC BY.

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

December–January

FRUITING

January–March

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

OBL: Obligate Wetland

Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY

centrolepis: Pointed scale

pallida: From the Latin pallidus ‘pale or pallid’

NVS CODE

CENPAL

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

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: DPR, DPS, DPT, NS, NStr, RR 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 4. *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>.
- Ford KA. 2014. Centrolepidaceae. In: Breitwieser I, Brownsey PJ, Heenan PB, Wilton AD. Flora of New Zealand - Seed Plants. Fascicle 2. Manaaki Whenua Press, Lincoln. <https://doi.org/10.7931/J2H41PBX>
- 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).

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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