Euchiton audax

COMMON NAMES
creeping cudweed

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Not Threatened
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Stoloniferous perennial; stems 1-few, usually ascending, sometimes erect, usually simple, rarely sparingly branched, (2)-5-20-(40) cm tall. Lvs usually mostly basal at flowering; basal lvs short-petiolate, densely white-tomentose on lower surface usually including mid-vein, usually moderately to densely, sometimes sparsely tomentose on upper, plane, narrow- to broad- obovate or oblanceolate, long-cuneate, usually obtuse, sometimes acute, shortly mucronate, (5)-15-40-(60) × (2)-5-12 mm; cauline lvs usually becoming much reduced upwards, often oblong, acute, finally apetiolate and broad-based. Capitula c. 1-2 mm diam., (5)-8-numerous in dense ± globular terminal clusters, very rarely smaller axillary clusters below; longest subtending lvs 0.5-1.5× diam. of cluster. Involucral bracts elliptic to oblong-elliptic, obtuse to subacute, 3.5-4 mm long; stereome green, sometimes tinged reddish purple toward apex; lamina yellow to pale brown or orange; gap and margins usually tinged pinkish purple, sometimes clear. Achenes minutely papillate, c. 0.7 mm long.



Banks Peninsula, Canterbury. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 26/04/2019, Licence: CC BY-NC.



On riverbank, Lake Ōhau. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 23/01/2021, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA
E. audax is very similar to *E. ruahinicus* but is distinguished by the broader, more often obtuse basal leaves, less leafy stems, shorter leaves subtending the terminal inflorescences, and generally paler bract lamina. See *E. ruahinicus* factsheet for more information. *E. japonicus* is also similar but differs by having bright green leaves that are sparsely hairy on the surface and have three nerves on the underside.

HABITAT
Grassland, forest margins and clearings, coastal sites, scrubland, rock outcrops, riverbeds, pasture, waste places. A species of lowland to subalpine elevations favouring dry short tussock grassland communities dominated by Poa cita or more commonly Festuca novae-zelandiae. This aster is also associated with other native and introduced grasses such as Rytidosperma clavatum. Anthoxanthum odoratum and Lachnagrostis sp. and is repeatedly found in grazed pastureland and turfy banks. As an opportunist plant it also frequents other dry open niches such as rock outcrops. scrub, riverbeds. tracks and cuttings. and occasionally turns up as a weed in crevices in paths and roads in urban areas. Plants are not common along the coasts and then restricted to cliff areas.

GENUS
Euchiton

FAMILY
Asteraceae

AUTHORITY
Euchiton audax (D.G.Drury) Holub

SYNONYMS
Gnaphalium audax D.G.Drury, Euchiton audax (D.G.Drury) Anderb. (nom. illegit.)

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL
Pappate cypselae are dispersed by wind and water (Thorsen et al., 2009).

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING
FACU: Facultative Upland
Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY
euchiton: From the Greek eu (good) and chiton (tunic or covering)
audax: Bold

NVS CODE
EUCAUD

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 28

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Not Threatened
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Auckland: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Declining | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, PF, RR 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 Not Threatened 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
Drury, D. G. 1972. The cluster and solitary-headed cudweeds native to New Zealand:(Gnaphalium Section Euchiton-Compositae). *New Zealand journal of botany*, *10*(1), 112-179.
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 11: 285-309.
Webb, C.J.; Sykes, W.R.; Garnock-Jones, P.J. 1988: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. IV. *Naturalised Pteridophytes, Gymnosperms, Dicotyledons*. Botany Division DSIR, Christchurch.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact sheet prepared by Marley Ford (13 December 22). Brief description, Distribution, Habitat, Features, and Similar taxa sections copied from Drury (1972) & Webb et al. (1988).
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MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/euchiton-audax/

PDF DATE

07 June 2026