Euchiton audax

COMMON NAME
creeping cudweed

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

FAMILY
Asteraceae

AUTHORITY
Euchiton audax (D.G.Drury) Holub

FLORA CATEGORY
Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE
EUCAUD

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 28

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened

HABITAT
Grassland, forest margins and clearings, coastal sites, scrubland, rock outcrops, riverbeds, pasture, waste places.
A species of lowland to subalpine altitudes 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.

In scoria, Rangitoto Island.

In scoria, Rangitoto Island.

FEATURES

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.

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.

LIFE CYCLE

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

ETYMOLOGY

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

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).

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.

MORE INFORMATION

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