

Leptinella atrata subsp. atrata

COMMON NAME

black scree button daisy

SYNONYMS

Cotula atrata Hook.f., *C. atrata* Hook.f. subsp. *atrata*

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Leptinella atrata (Hook.f.) D.G.Lloyd et C.J.Webb subsp. *atrata*

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 52

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, inland and easterly from North Canterbury to Northern Otago

HABITAT

Subalpine to alpine (> 1000 m a.s.l.) in open, mobile, sparsely vegetated screes.



Mt Hutt, January. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



St Mary's Range. Photographer: John Barkla

FEATURES

Fleshy, monoecious, perennial herb producing 1 or more summer green leaf tufts amongst mobile scree. Rhizomes ascending, at or close to rock surface when young, becoming deeply buried with age, up to 10 mm long, thick, very fleshy, pale or pinkish-red, sparsely short-hairy, glabrate; branches often in clusters of up to 4 diverging from a flowering node and the nodes immediately behind, most of these dying in the first season, leaves usually crowded around rhizome apex, sometimes up to 25 mm apart. Roots numerous, fleshy, very long, extensively branching, thick up to 2 mm diameter. leaves 2-pinnatifid, 20-80 x 5-13 mm; blade 15-60 mm long, obovate, coriaceous and fleshy, grey-green tinged with red, especially on the primary and secondary axes, sparsely pilose hairy, midrib not raised on ventral surface; pinnae 8-15 pairs, cut to rhachis, proximal pinnae distant, distal ones overlapping, broadly elliptic and divided, reducing to distant oblong simple proximal pinnae; secondary pinnae 0-9 per pinna, equally on distal and proximal sides, cut to midrib of pinna, oblong or obovate, with rounded apices, upturned, occasionally with 1-2 small lobes on either side. Peduncles scarcely longer than leaves, 30-120 mm, stout, fleshy, pilose hairy with 4-10 evenly spaced bracts; lowermost bracts deeply divided, scarcely smaller than leaves, reducing evenly to simple, oblong or shallowly divided uppermost bracts. Capitula 5-13 mm diameter, surface convex; involucre hemispherical; involucral bracts unequally 2-3-seriate, overtopped by mature florets, grey-green tinged pink or red, more or less pilose hairy, outer bracts exceeding florets, thick, pinnatifid with up to 6 pairs of oblong lobes on sides, gradually changing to thinner, simple obovate inner involucral bracts whose margins are finely scarious; receptacle convex; pistillate florets 100-240 in several rows, 3.25-3.75 mm long, straight, very dark red to almost black; corolla 5 times as long as wide, teeth conspicuous, equal and diverging; staminate florets equal in number. Stigmas of pistillate and staminate florets not exerted far beyond corolla mouth, retracting into corolla tube at anthesis. Cypsela 1.8-2.8 x 0.8-1 mm, slightly compressed, pale brown or dark brown, deeply wrinkled when mature

SIMILAR TAXA

Differs from *L. atrata* subsp. *luteola* (D.G.Lloyd) D.G.Lloyd et C.Webb by the dark red almost black rather than yellow flowers, leaves whose distal pinnae overlap rather than not and whose secondary pinnae are upturned rather than held flat. Differs from *L. dendyi* (Cockayne) D.G.Lloyd et C.Webb by the smaller capitula (up to 13 cf 20 mm), dark red to almost black rather than yellow with red-tipped florets, convex rather than flat receptacle, and monoecious rather than gynodioecious flowers.

FLOWERING

November - January

FLOWER COLOURS

Black, Red/Pink

FRUITING

January - April

LIFE CYCLE

Papery cypselae are dispersed by wind and possibly attachment (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - should not be removed from the wild

ETYMOLOGY

leptinella: From the Greek word leptos (meaning slender, thin or delicate), referring to the ovary

atrata: From the Greek ater 'black'

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 31 August 2006. Description from Lloyd (1972) - as *Cotula atrata* subsp. *atrata*.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Lloyd, D.G. 1972: A revision of the New Zealand, Subantarctic, and South American species of *Cotula*, section *Leptinella*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 10: 277-372.

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

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Leptinella atrata* subsp. *atrata* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/leptinella-atrata-subsp-atrata/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

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