

Leptinella lanata

BIOSTATUS

Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPS, RR

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Robust, monoecious, creeping perennial herb forming small diffuse patches. **Rhizomes** on soil or rock surfaces, stout, 1–4 mm diameter, somewhat fleshy, initially covered with a thick tangle of lanate hairs, soon becoming glabrate or glabrous, dark brown and more or less woody; branches usually clustered, up to 4 radiating from around a flowering node; leaves 2–4 clustered at apex, most 20–50 mm distant. Short shoots usually absent, occasionally present as a few reduced leaves. **Roots** largely confined to older stems, slender up to 1 mm diameter. **Leaves** 1-pinnatifid, 10–25 × 4–10 mm; blade 5–20 mm long, broadly elliptic, thick, fleshy, light green, covered with a few lanate hairs when young, especially on rhachis, glabrate to glabrous; midrib not raised on ventral surface; pinnae 3–5 pairs, distal ones overlapping, cut to rhachis, broadly elliptic or oblong if undivided; teeth up to 4 per pinna, on larger pinna, mostly on distal margin, cut ½ across pinna, triangular, obtuse. **Peduncles** borne on rhizomes, longer than leaves, 10–30 mm, slender, ebracteate, densely lanate hairy. **Capitula** 6–10 mm diameter, surface hemispherical; involucre hemispherical; involucre bracts 30 in 2–3-seriate, subequal rows, broadly elliptic, thick, fleshy, green, covered with deciduous lanate hairs, margins narrowly hyaline, scarious; pistillate florets 50–100, 2- or more seriate, 3 mm long, more or less straight, yellow-green, corolla twice as long as wide, dentition equal, staminate florets 70–90. **Cypsela** up to 2.3 × 0.8 mm, golden-brown, turgid, obscurely 4-angled, shiny and unwrinkled.

SIMILAR TAXA

The lanate (woolly) rhizomes, glabrescent leaves and lanate peduncles serve to distinguish this species from all other representatives of the genus in New Zealand. It is so distinctive that it could not be confused with any of the other *Leptinella* species recorded from the New Zealand Subantarctic islands.

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku. Also recently (2004) discovered on Heard Island.

HABITAT

Coastal on rocks, cliff tops, on damp exposed peat, in rock crevices and within seal haul outs and bird nesting grounds.

THREATS

Not threatened but listed because it is a narrow range endemic confined to a small geographic area.

GENUS

Leptinella



Enderby Island. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 25/12/2015, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.



Enderby Island. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 25/12/2015, Licence: CC BY-NC-SA.

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Leptinella lanata Hook.f.

SYNONYMS

Cotula lanata (Hook.f.) Hook.f.

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October–April

FRUITING

December–May

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from rooted pieces but requires cool conditions to thrive. Will not tolerate humidity.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

ETYMOLOGY

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

lanata: Woolly

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 52

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, RR

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR, SO

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: IE

2004 | Range Restricted

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Lloyd DG. 1972. A revision of the New Zealand, Subantarctic, and South American species of *Cotula*, section *Leptinella*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 10(2): 277–372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1972.10429156>.

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 31 August 2006. Description from Lloyd (1972).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/leptinella-lanata/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026