

Olearia lineata

SYNONYMS

Olearia virgata var. *lineata* Kirk

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Olearia lineata (Kirk) Cockayne

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

OLELIN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: PD, RF

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: RF, PD

2004 | Sparse

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Bushy small tree bearing masses of erect square in cross-section twigs that have clusters of small very thin leaves that are white underneath inhabiting damper sites in the southern 2/3 of the South Island. Leaves 15-40mm long by 1-2mm wide, surface not wrinkled. Flowers small, in clusters.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. South Island, easterly from north Canterbury south to Southland and Stewart Island.

HABITAT

Lowland to montane (10-300 m a.s.l.) grey scrub, tussock grassland and forest margins. Often on river terraces in or near seepages and ephemeral wetlands, on occasion even growing in shallow water. Also found on the margins of steep river gorges, and in and amongst rock outcrops, boulder field and at the toe of alluvial fans.



Hyde. Photographer: John Barkla



Shrubland, Millers Flat. Photographer: John Barkla

FEATURES

Small tree up to 8 m tall with narrow to broad canopy crowns. Trunk stout, erect, solitary, sometimes several arising from the ground, up to 0.6 m d.b.h. Bark grey or charcoal-grey, firm, deeply furrowed, shedding in tough, corky shards. Branches sparse to numerous, at first ascending then widely spreading; branchlets grey to charcoal grey, more or less square and angled in cross-section, deeply and longitudinally grooved, slender, at first erect then spreading, ultimately pendulous. Brachyblasts 10-30 mm long distantly spaced. Leaves 2-10-fascicled; 20-60 x 0.4-0.8 mm, linear to very narrow-linear, upper surface dark green more or less covered with finely appressed greyish-white indument, glabrate to glabrous with age, undersides clad in soft, white to greyish-white appressed tomentum, margin often strongly revolute. Capitula discoid, 1-8-fascicled, 2-4(-6) mm diameter, pedicellate, pedicels up to 40 mm long; florets 6-10, off-white to white (rarely creamy yellow), involucre bracts 2-4-seriate, narrowly lanceolate to oblanceolate, undersides finely grey-white villous. Cypselas 1-2 mm long, compressed, finely pubescent, puberulent to glabrescent, pappus hairs 2-3 mm long, off white to buff.

SIMILAR TAXA

None - the greyish coloured branches, mature trees with typically spreading canopy crowns, numerous pendulous branchlets, finely linear, greyish-green leaves, and distinctively long pedicellate flowers are unique to this species. *Olearia lineata* cv. *Dartonii* is a popular cultivar grown widely and often erroneously as this species, it has similar but wider green to grey-green leaves with very white undersides and a less pendulous more narrowly erect growth habit. It seems to be a hybrid involving *Olearia lineata* and *O. traversiorum* (F.Muell.) Hook.f.

FLOWERING

November - January

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

January - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from semi-hardwood cuttings and fresh seed. A beautiful specimen tree which is very drought tolerant once established but can also tolerate waterlogged soils, and is of course extremely cold tolerant. The fine, linear, grey-green leaves and somewhat spreading pendulous branches and stout tree habit are particularly noteworthy. It deserves to be more widely cultivated than it currently is.

THREATS

Widespread and at times locally abundant (especially in some parts of Central Otago) *O. lineata* is otherwise often known from only widely scattered sites with few individuals. Although widespread the majority of the known populations are not officially protected and recruitment is often lacking. *Olearia lineata* together with the majority of Eastern South Island endemic *Olearia* Sect. *Divaricaster* Heads is the subject of a major Department of Conservation initiated Recovery Plan. As part of that work this species has been subject to intensive survey.

ETYMOLOGY

olearia: Named after Johann Gottfried Olearius, a 17th-century German scholar, writer of hymns and author of *Specimen Florae Hallensis*

lineata: Linear, striped with a parallel line (plumb line)

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/olearia-lineata/>