Picris burbidgeae

BIOSTATUS
Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: Sp, DPS, DPT, EF, PD, SO
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

FLOWER COLOURS
Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Annual to perennial herb 0.5–1.2–(2) m tall. **Stem** basally woody, dark green to purple-green, branched from upper ½–⅓. Indumentum of 2-hooked, bristly hairs, copious. **Leaves** yellow-green. **Rosette leaves** shortly petiolate, lamina 100–200 × 10–25 mm, narrowly lanceolate to ovate, entire or dentate; stem leaves lanceolate to narrowly lanceolate, entire or dentate, becoming smaller toward plant apex. **Lower stem leaves** 100–200 × 10–25 mm. **Upper stem leaves** 20–40 × 0.3–0.5 mm. **Terminal leaves** bract or thread-like. **Inflorescences** in corymbose panicles. **Capitula** numerous, 9–12 mm long, 5–6 mm diameter, with 30–45 sulphur yellow flowers. **Involucrum** of 28–40 bracts in 3–4 irregular outer and 2 inner rows, length of bracts increasing from outer to inner rows. **Bracts** with a single line of 2-hooked anchor or bifid hairs along midrib on outer surface. **Achenes** narrowly fusiform 4–5 mm long, 0.8–1.1 mm diam, tapering into short cuspis. **Achene ribs** 20–35. **Pappus** 5–8 mm long, pappus rays 50–80.

SIMILAR TAXA
The stem and leaf indumentum of oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides* (L.) Holub) has 2-, 3-, 4- or 5-hooked anchor hairs and the hairs of the leaves arise from a conspicuous swollen base. The involucral bracts of the flowers are in two rows, with the five outer involucral bracts ovate to cordate, and the apex of the inner bracts feather-like. Unlike our indigenous oxtongues (*Picris* spp.) the achenes of the introduced oxtongue (*H. echioides*) are heteromorphic: the outer achenes, are larger, white, and pilose hairy; the inner shorter, dark-brown and glabrous. In our indigenous oxtongues (*Picris* spp.) the achenes are never heteromorphic. *Picris burbidgeae* differs from *P. angustifolia* DC chiefly by details of its involucrum. In this species they are in 2–4 rows. The outer bracts are longer than ≣ of the length of the innermost bracts, often almost as long as the inner bracts. The outer bracts are usually recurved and become distinctly squarrose and are either not as wide or wider than the inner bracts. The achenes are smaller (5–8 mm) and also the cuspis (0.3–0.9 mm). The cuspis is ≣ – 1⁄14 the total achene length.

Dec 2006. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.

In cultivation. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 03/04/2009, Licence: CC BY.

DISTRIBUTION
Indigenous. New Zealand: Manawatāwhi / Three Kings Islands, North Island (Te Paki to the Huntly Basin, near Waihi and Rotorua Lakes area, as well as most of the Hauraki Gulf islands), Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island. Also eastern Australia, Norfolk Island, and the main island of Hawaii

HABITAT
Primarily on offshore islands or in coastal or lowland situations. Often on talus slopes. This species requires open ground and will not tolerate heavy shade. It has been collected from gravelled margins of roadsides and in gravel pits.

THREATS
Habitat loss through coastal development, succession, displacement by weed invasion, it is also prone top accidental eradication because of its weedy appearance.

GENUS
Picris

FAMILY
Asteraceae

AUTHORITY
Picris burbidgeae S.Holzapfel

SYNONYMS
None. In the most recent New Zealand flora treatment all indigenous Picris have been referred to Picris hieracioides L. as species collected here once as a naturalised weed, and to which none of our indigenous species are closely related.

ENDEMIC TAXON
No

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
(July)–October–January–(May)

FRUITING
(August)–October–(June)

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easy from fresh seed which usually germinates within one to two months. A somewhat unusual plant that is unlikely to prove popular in cultivation, and it can become invasive in some situations.

CULTIVATION
Plants can be seen at the Auckland Regional Council Botanic Gardens, at Manurewa, and at Auckland Zoo.

NVS CODE
PICBUR

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 10

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: EF, PD, SO, Sp
2012 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: EF, PD, SO, Sp
2009 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: EF, PD, SO, Sp
2004 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: Sp, DPR, DPS, DPT, EF, PF, SO 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.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

de Lange PJ, Heenan PB, Norton DA, Rolfe JR, Sawyer JWD. 2010. Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch. 471 p.
Holzapfel S, Lack HW. 1993. New species of *Picris* (Asteraceae, Lactuceae) from Australia. *Willdenowia 23*: 181–191.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2009). Description based on Holzapfel & Lack (1993) and fresh specimens. Description subsequently published in de Lange et al (2010).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/picris-burbidgeae/

PDF DATE

27 May 2026