

Pilosella officinarum

COMMON NAME

hawkweed, mouse-ear hawkweed

SYNONYMS

Hieracium pilosella L.

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Pilosella officinarum F.Schultz & Sch.Bip.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

NVS CODE

PILOFF

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial. A plant of lowland, montane and subalpine habitats. Grows in sites with low to moderate fertility but appears to prefer moderate fertility. Shrubland, tussockland, cliff, bluff, riverbed and herbfield communities.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING

FACU: Facultative Upland

Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Perennial herb with rosettes and stolons 5-10 cm tall. Leaves 2.5-5 by 0.6-1.5 cm, glaucescent green above with white felt-like underside. Single yellow flower head per rosette, outer flower rays with red stripe.

SIMILAR TAXA

Pilosella officinarum is distinguished from other species by its large solitary pale yellow capitula and the dense stellate pubescence on stolons and beneath leaves.

FLOWERING

October, November, December, January, February

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

FRUITING

November - April - (May)

LIFE CYCLE

Perennial. The hermaphrodite flowers are probably apomictic (produces viable seed without fertilisation) in New Zealand. Vegetative reproduction occurs through the production of rosettes by stolons (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Seed is prolifically produced at approximately 1000/dm squared but it is probable that no seed bank is formed (Timmins & MacKenzie 1995). Seed is dispersed by gravity and wind.



Pilosella officinarum. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Near Mangatoetoe Hut, Aorangi Forest Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 02/10/2010, Licence: CC BY.

YEAR NATURALISED

1878

ORIGIN

Europe, N. and C. Asia

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Accidental

TOLERANCES

The plant is tolerant of drought; intolerant of shade; highly tolerant of frost and slightly tolerant of poor drainage. Highly tolerant to physical damage and grazing. Requires low to medium soil fertility.

ETYMOLOGY

pilosella: Softly hairy

NATIONAL PEST PLANT ACCORD SPECIES

This plant is listed in the 2020 National Pest Plant Accord. The National Pest Plant Accord (NPPA) is an agreement to prevent the sale and/or distribution of specified pest plants where either formal or casual horticultural trade is the most significant way of spreading the plant in New Zealand. For up to date information and an electronic copy of the 2020 Pest Plant Accord manual (including plant information and images) visit the [MPI website](#).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pilosella-officinarum/>