

# Pimelea dura

## COMMON NAMES

pimelea

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, RR

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Very low-growing shrub with hairy twigs bearing pairs of very small leaves that are hairy underneath, hairy white flowers and pink or pale orange fruit inhabiting short tussock grasslands in the Ashburton, Rangitata and Rakaia Catchments in Canterbury. Leaves 3-4mm long by 1mm wide.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

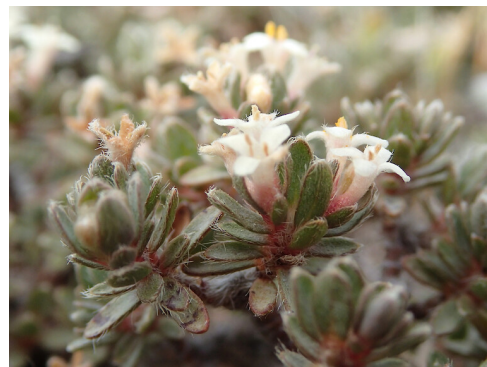
A small, much-branched, appressed shrub up to 50 mm high and 100-200 mm across. Short branches radiate from a stout main stem with short sympodial and lateral branchlets, forming small, discrete, open cushions. Young stems brown, sparsely to moderately densely covered in short, grey-white hairs; internodes 0.3-1.0 mm long. Older stems grey-brown, sometimes buried in wind-blown silt or sand. Node buttresses smooth, brown, lunate to elongate, sometimes prominent on leafless stems. Leaves decussate, ascending, loosely imbricate, sessile or on very short (0.1 mm) red petioles. Lamina 3.0-4.0 × 0.8-1.2 mm, pale glaucous-green, elliptic to ovate, or oblong, slightly keeled and adaxially concave; tip obtuse; base cuneate; adaxial surface glabrous (rarely with a few hairs), abaxial surface moderately densely covered with short hairs; stomata on both adaxial and abaxial leaf surfaces. Inflorescences terminal on branchlets, 2-6-flowered; involucral bracts 4, similar in size to adjacent leaves or larger (4.0 × 1.6 mm) partly hiding the flowers. Receptacles sparsely to moderately hairy. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white or sometimes faintly pink-tinted, on very short (0.1 mm) pedicels, with a sparse cover of short hair outside, inside hairless. Female tube 1.5-2mm long, ovary portion 1.5 mm, calyx lobes 0.9 × 0.9 mm; hermaphrodite tube 3-4 mm long, ovary portion 1.3 mm, calyx lobes 1.1 × 1.1 mm. Anther dehiscence introrse. Ovary apex bearing a cluster of short hairs at summit. Fruits ovoid, opaque, pinkish white, pink or pale orange 4.5 × 3.1 mm. Seeds 2.2 × 1.2mm.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *Pimelea sericeovillosa* from which it differs by its more open-branched habit, more numerous flowers and adaxially glabrous leaves. It may also be confused with *P. mesoa* (subsp. *mesoa* only) from which it differs by its smaller leaves and flowers and pinkish white, pink or pale orange fruits.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (inland Canterbury, in the middle catchments of the Rakaia, South Ashburton and Rangitata Rivers).



Heron Basin. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 10/01/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Heron Basin. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 10/01/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## HABITAT

Montane to alpine. A species of sparsely vegetated well-drained silty, sandy, or gravelly soils on old moraines and outwash surfaces. Mostly associated with short tussock (*Festuca novae-zelandiae* and *Poa colensoi*) grassland, often growing admixed with small shrubs and herbs or within moss and lichen cushions.

## THREATS

Burrows (2011) notes that this species is common in the Lake Heron and Lake Clearwater basins and in some reserved areas but that it is otherwise vulnerable to land development especially land being modified by topdressing, over-sowing or that which is heavily stocked with cattle or subject to the spread of wildling pines. He further observes that the ecology of the species is little known. Despite these comments the species was not assessed using the New Zealand Threat Classification Manual (Townsend et al. 2008) and so has no valid threat assessment. At this stage it seems that based on the evidence presented by Burrows (2011) an interim threat assessment of "Data Deficient" is probably the most appropriate.

## GENUS

Pimelea

## FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Pimelea dura* C.J.Burrows

## SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2011)

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

September - November

## FRUITING

unknown

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Unknown. Probably easily grown from semi-hard and hardwood cuttings.

## ETYMOLOGY

**pimelea:** from Greek pimelē, meaning "lard" or "soft fat," presumably referring to the oily seeds or fleshy cotyledons.

## NVS CODE

PIMDUR

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Data Deficient

2012 | Data Deficient

2009 | Data Deficient

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Burrows, C.J. 2011: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 4. The taxonomic treatment of ten endemic abaxially hairy-leaved species. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 49: 41-106.
- de Lange, P.J.; Norton, D.A.; Courtney, S.P.; Heenan, P.B.; Barkla, J.W.; Cameron, E.K.; Hitchmough, R.; Townsend, A.J. 2009: Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand (2008 revision). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 61-96.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange (30 April 2011) adapted from Burrows (2011).

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-dura/>

## PDF DATE

27 May 2026