

Pimelea eremitica

COMMON NAMES

roimata ō Tohe, pimelea

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: DPR, OL

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Low growing sprawling shrub to 40cm tall with greyish-hairy thin flexible twigs bearing small narrow blue-green leaves, hairy white flowers and whiteish fruit inhabiting Maunganui Bluff in Northland. Leaves 4-6mm long by 1.5-2mm wide, with a glistening under surface.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A small to medium-sized, erect to suberect shrub, up to 400 mm tall, branching sympodially and with many erect, thin lateral branches. Young branchlets light brown, moderately densely covered with white to grey-white appressed hair. Internodes 1.0–1.5 mm. Older stems glabrate to hairless, brown to dark grey. Node buttresses usually short (0.2 mm), lunate, sometimes elongate masked by hair on young branchlets, small but moderately prominent on some leafless branchlets. Leaves decussate, ascendant, becoming patent on larger plants, on short (0.5–1 mm) red petioles, often persistent. Lamina slightly keeled, moderately stiff, 4–6 × 1.5–2 mm, elliptic, glabrous, medium-green, sometimes red-margined, midvein evident abaxially, but not prominent; acute, but blunt tipped, base cuneate. Stomata present on adaxial side only. Abaxial surface glistens. Inflorescences terminal on leading stems, 1–5-flowered, involucral bracts 4, similar in size to adjacent leaves or wider (7 × 3.5 mm). Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white, on very short pedicels (0.3 mm), circumscissile near base, outside of tube and calyx lobes moderately hairy, inside hairless. Female tube 3 mm long, ovary portion 2.6 mm, calyx lobes (ascendant) 2 × 1 mm; hermaphrodite tube 6 mm long, ovary portion 2.5 mm, calyx lobes 3.5 × 2.5 mm. Anther dehiscence semi-latorse. Ovary with short hairs at summit and a few down to base. Fruits ovoid, fleshy, white with pink flush, opaque 4 × 2.7 mm. Seeds 3 × 1.8 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA

Pimelea eremitica is allied to *P. telura* and *P. sporadica*. From *P. telura* it differs by its smaller stature (plants up to 400 mm cf. 1.0 m tall) and smaller leaves whose undersides that are adaxially concave or keeled. From *P. sporadica* it differs by the thinner (up to 2.5 mm c.f. 4.0 mm thick), flexible, sympodial and ascendant lateral stems, strong keeled rather than adaxially concave or keeled leaves and pinkish rather than white fruits. *Pimelea telura* is confined to the Three Kings, *P. sporadica* North Cape and Cape Brett, Bay of Islands, near Maunganui Bluff and at Hicks Bay (East Cape). *Pimelea eremitica* is known only from Maunganui Bluff.



Maunganui Bluff. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Date taken: 02/09/2010, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Maunganui Bluff. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 09/09/2010, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island: Maunganui Bluff

HABITAT

Coastal. On the exposed summit of a large basaltic outcrop growing in short exotic grassland and low shrubs amongst basalt boulders

THREATS

Previously listed by de Lange et al (2009) in Appendix 2, under the informal name *Pimelea* (f) (AK 189577; Maunganui Bluff) (OL - One Location)) as taxonomically Indeterminate / Data Deficient. Burrows (2009) states that the single population is of limited size making the future of this species precarious. Cultivation, planting-out, and cautious management to increase numbers are desirable. During September 2010 the Department of Conservation together with Te Rorowa who maintain mana whenua over Maunganui Bluff undertook a survey and found 24 plants in a single site which is threatened by goats. As such this species qualifies as Nationally Critical, a status it should obtain when the next threat listing is undertaken.

GENUS

Pimelea

FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY

Pimelea eremitica C.J.Burrows

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2009)

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October - February

FRUITING

November - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

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

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL

2009 | Data Deficient

2004 | Data Deficient

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Burrows, C.J. 2009: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 2. The endemic *Pimelea prostrata* and *Pimelea urvilliana* species complexes. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 163–229.

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 August 2009). Description adapted from Burrows (2009).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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