

# Pimelea gnidia

## COMMON NAMES

pimelea

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Shrub to 1.5m tall with reddish twigs bearing pairs of bright green pointed leaves and hairy white flowers inhabiting higher rainfall upland (or sea level in deep south) areas from the Tararua Range to Fiordland. Leaves 5-35mm long by 2-7mm wide. Flowers to 5.5mm long. Fruit dry, enclosing black seed.

## FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

An erect to suberect much-branched shrub up to 1.5 m tall (reduced in stature on exposed sites and poor soils). Branches and branchlets ascending, glabrous or sparsely hairy at leaf axils and hairy on receptacles; internodes usually short. Node buttresses, brown or black, occupy the whole internode and may be prominent after leaf fall; internodes 2–7 mm long. Bark ages to grey. Leaves decussate, ascending, later sometimes patent or deflexed, often imbricate, on petioles 1–3 mm long. Lamina pale to medium or olive green, coriaceous, elliptic, ovate or sometimes oblong, obovate or lanceolate, 5–35 × 2–7 mm, keeled, acute, blunt-pointed or slightly apiculate, base cuneate. Margins thickened, slightly down-turned; midvein prominent abaxially, sunken above; lateral vein pattern camptodromous but not clearly evident; stomata only on under side. Inflorescences few to many-flowered, pedicels 1–2 mm long, persistent. Involucral bracts 4, similar to leaves but usually wider. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers hairy on outside; inside hairless, fragrant, white or flushed rose, sometimes wholly pink often with lower tube red. Calyx lobes open in salverform fashion. Female tube to 5.5 mm long, ovary portion 3 mm, calyx lobes 3.5 × 1.8 mm. female tube to 9 mm long, ovary portion 3.5 mm, calyx lobes 3.2 × 1.8 mm; staminodes short, at mouth of tube. Anther filaments inserted below mouth of tube; anthers yellow. Ovary with short hairs at summit and to about half-way down. Fruits ovoid, green, drying brown, 4 mm long. Seeds ovoid 3.4 × 1.6 mm. The dried hypanthia disperse with fruits inside.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Very close to *P. longifolia* (it could be considered an upland form of that species) from which it differs by its smaller leaves, shorter flowers and preference for mostly subalpine habitats. *Pimelea gnidia* is only coastal in the southern part of its range where *P. longifolia* is not known. Both species are said to frequently hybridise (see Burrows 2008).



Turnbull, Tararua Range. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 13/12/2008, Licence: CC BY.



Turnbull, Tararua Range. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 13/12/2008, Licence: CC BY.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North (southern third), and South Island (westerly from Nelson to Fiordland)

## HABITAT

Coastal and lowland (southern part of range only) otherwise montane to subalpine. On rock, rock debris, leached acidic mineral soil, and peaty loam in open forest, forest margins and scrub on stream margins, landslides, valley heads, moraines, heathlands, burnt forest areas.

## GENUS

Pimelea

## FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Pimelea gnidia* (J.R.Forst. et G.Forst.) Lam.

## SYNONYMS

*Banksia gnidia* J.R.Forst. et G.Forst.; *Passerina gnidia* L.f.; *Cookia gnidia* J.F.Gmel.; *Pimelea gnidia* var. *menziesii* Hook. f.; *Pimelea crosby-smithiana* Petrie

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

*Pimelea crosby-smithiana* previously regarded as a distinct species is now regarded as part of the natural variation of *P. gnidia*.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

October - January

## FRUITING

December - April

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Fickle. Can be grown from cuttings, and occasionally seed germinates in garden conditions. Does best in full sun on a well drained soil. However, even well established plants are prone to sudden collapse.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

**gnidia:** Named after the genus *Gnidia* which is also in the Thymelaeaceae family. *Gnidia* is named after Gnidus, a town in Crete.

## NVS CODE

PIMGNI

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Burrows CJ. 2008. Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 1. The taxonomic treatment of seven endemic, glabrous-leaved species. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 46(2): 127–176.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00288250809509760>.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Burrows (2008).

## MORE INFORMATION

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

## PDF DATE

08 June 2026