

Pimelea hirta

COMMON NAMES

pimelea

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Data Deficient | Qualifiers: CR

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Shrub with sprawling hairy dark twigs to 40cm long bearing pairs of small pointed leaves that are inconspicuously hairy underneath and hairy white flowers and red fruit inhabiting upland areas of the East Cape and Kaweka to Ruahine Ranges. Leaves 6-9mm long by 2.5-5mm wide.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A robust, much-branched procumbent to decumbent shrub with stems up to 400 mm long. Branching sympodial and lateral. Young stems brown, with a moderately dense cover of long, dull-white hairs; internodes 1-3 mm long. Older stems glabrous, dark brown to black. Node buttresses lunate, 0.2 mm long, smooth, brown, masked by hairs on young stems, not very prominent on leafless stems. Leaves decussate, ascending and loosely imbricate to patent, on short, dark red petioles (0.3 mm). Lamina 6.0-9.0 × 2.5-5.0 mm, medium green, elliptic to broad-elliptic, or broad-ovate or oblong slightly adaxially concave to keeled, mid-vein evident, sunken adaxially; tip acute; base cuneate; abaxial surface moderately sparsely covered by dull white, relatively long, straight (rarely curled) hairs; stomata on both adaxial and abaxial leaf surfaces. Inflorescences terminal, loose, 4-7-flowered. Involucral bracts 4, similar in size to ordinary leaves or larger (6-3 mm). Receptacle moderately densely hairy. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white on short (0.8 mm) pedicels, very hairy outside, inside hairless. Female tube 5 mm long, ovary portion wrinkled, 2 mm, calyx lobes 1.9 × 1.1 mm; hermaphrodite tube 6 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm, calyx lobes 2.8 × 2.0 mm. Anther dehiscence introrse. Ovary with a few short hairs at summit. Fruits red, ovoid, fleshy 4.0 × 2.7 mm. Seeds ovoid, 3.5 × 2.0 mm, crest thin.

SIMILAR TAXA

Potentially confused in the field with *Pimelea oreophila* subsp. *ephaistica* from which it differs by its larger overall stature and leaves, and by the obviously longer, denser abaxial leaf hairs.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Raukumara, Maungaharuru, Kaweka and Ruahine Ranges)

HABITAT

Alpine. Usually on limestone outcrops but a component of tall tussock grassland and subalpine scrub



Rocky slopes of of alpine summit, Mt Hikurangi Gisborne. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 25/02/2026, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Rocky slopes of of alpine summit, Mt Hikurangi Gisborne. Photographer: Marley Ford, Date taken: 25/02/2026, Licence: CC BY-NC.

THREATS

Pimelea hirta is newly described that has not been recognised by an informal tag name previously. Therefore this species has not been formally listed by the New Zealand Threat Listing Panel (see de Lange et al. 2009). However Burrows (2011) did not use the New Zealand Threat Listing Classification System (see Townsend et al. 2008) in his conservation assessment, and his comments, unquantified as they are suggest that the best course of action is to list this species as “Data Deficient” until such time as better data is obtained, and the species can be assessed by an appropriate threat listing panel.

GENUS

Pimelea

FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY

Pimelea hirta C.J.Burrows

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2011)

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

December - February

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.

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.

Townsend, A.J.; de Lange, P.J.; Norton, D.A.; Molloy, J.; Miskelly, C.; Duffy, C. 2008: The New Zealand Threat Classification System manual. Wellington, Department of Conservation

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared for NZPCN by: P.J. de Lange (1 May 2011). Description adapted from Burrows (2011).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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27 May 2026