Pimelea mesoa subsp. mesoa

COMMON NAMES
pimelea

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION
Low shrub to 10cm tall bearing pairs of blueish-green pointed leaves that are hairy underneath and with hairy white flowers and orange fruit inhabiting valleys in the vicinity of Marlborough and north Canterbury. Leaves 4.5-7mm long by 1.8-2.5mm wide.

FLOWER COLOURS
White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
A small much-branched, suberect, or decumbent, sometimes appressed, shortly branched compact shrub fomring ± circular patches up to 200 mm diameter. Branching mainly sympodial, branches radiating from a stout main stem. Branches of young stems dark brown, moderately to densely covered with long grey-white or yellowish hairs, internodes 0.5–2.5 mm long. Older stems stout (to 10 mm), black, glabrate to glabrous. Node buttresses lunate to elongate, brown, prominent on leafless stems. Leaves decussate, ascending tightly imbricate, becoming patent, on short (0.3-0.5 mm) reddish petioles. Lamina 4.5-7.0 × 1.8-2.5 mm, dull glaucous-green, elliptic, broad-elliptic or oblong, sometimes ovate, slightly adaxially concave, mid-vein obscure; tip obtuse; base cuneate; abaxial surface moderately densely covered with long, straight or curled hairs; stomata on both adaxial and abaxial leaf surfaces. Inflorescences terminal, 4-12-flowered; involucral bracts 4, wider than ordinary leaves (6-8 × 3-4 mm). Receptacles densely hairy. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white, scented, on short (0.2 mm) pedicels, very hairy outside, inside hairless. Female tube 3-4 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm, calyx lobes 2 × 1 mm; hermaphrodite tube 5-6 mm long, ovary portion 1.5 mm, calyx lobes 3 × 1.5 mm. Anther dehiscence introrse. Ovary with sparse short hairs on apex. Fruits ovoid, fleshy, yellow to orange 4.0-5.0 × 2.0-3.2 mm. Seeds 2.5 × 1.3 mm.

SIMILAR TAXA
Pimelea mesoa has been confused in the past with Pimelea sericeovillosa from which it differs by its larger size, upright or elongate, prostrate stems, larger, adaxially glabrous leaves and larger, more numerous flowers. From P. oreophila with which it often grows, it can be distinguished by the abaxially densely hairy leaf surface and by the obtuse leaf tips. Pimelea mesoa subsp. macra differs from subsp. mesoa by its more slender root stock, procumbent laxer growth habit, longer non-radiating stems, longer internodes (2.0-5.0 mm cf. 0.5-2.5 mm in subsp. mesoa) less tightly imbricating and lax leaf arrangement.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (intermontane basins and adjacent river flats of the upper Wairau, Clarence and Awatere to the Waiau-uha, Hurunui and Waimakariri

HABITAT
Montane to alpine. A common species of intermontane basins and their associated river flats and alluvial terraces. Pimelea mesoa subsp. mesoa is mostly found within short tussock grassland where it commonly grows amongst Poa colensoi, Festuca novae-zelandiae, Raoulia spp. It also occasionally grows in open shrubland.

THREATS
Probably not threatened. However, some populations are small and are possibly threatened by competition from hawkweeds (Pilosella spp.). However as Pimelea mesoa subsp. meosa was not assessed by Burrows (2011) using the New Zealand Threat Classification Manual (Townsend et al. 2008) it has no valid threat assessment. So at this stage it seems best to recommend an interim threat assessment of “Data Deficient”.

GENUS
Pimelea

FAMILY
Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY
Pimelea mesoa subsp. mesoa C.J.Burrows

SYNONYMS
None (first described in 2011)

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
September - February

FRUITING
Unknown

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

WHERE TO BUY
Not commercially available.

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

NVS CODE
PIMMSM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 36

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DP
2012 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DP
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).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-mesoa-subsp-mesoa/

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