

Pimelea mimosa

COMMON NAMES

pimelea

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Low growing sprawling shrub with hairy twigs bearing pairs of narrow pointed hairy leaves, hairy white flowers and red fruit inhabiting Te Mata peak in the Hawkes Bay. Leaves pointing out from stem, 9-20mm long by 2.5-5mm wide, hairs glisten.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Procumbent to decumbent medium- sized shrubs to 250 mm high, with stems to 500 mm long. Branching mainly sympodial. Young branchlets brown, densely covered by moderately long, white hairs. Internodes 2-6 mm long; older stems glabrate, brown to grey-brown. Node buttresses short (0.2 mm), lunate, masked by hairs on young branchlets, not prominent on leafless stems. Leaves decussate, on short petioles (0.5-1.0 mm), ascending at first, soon becoming patent or deflexed, persistent. They may appear to be distichous on appressed branches. Lamina to 9.0-20.0 × 2.5-5.0 mm, varying in width from plant to plant, medium green, adaxially concave or slightly keeled, elliptic to narrow-elliptic, acute, base cuneate; both surfaces of young leaves uniformly densely covered by short, glistening, white, appressed hairs. Mid-vein usually not evident. Older leaves become glabrate and appear dull-green. Stomata on both surfaces. Inflorescences terminal, 2-7-flowered, compact. Involucral bracts 4, the same size as, or slightly wider than, adjacent leaves (9-12 × 4-6 mm) partly hiding the flowers. Receptacle densely covered in short hairs. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white, on short (0.5 mm) pedicels, densely hairy outside, inside hairless. Female tube 4 mm long, ovary portion 3 mm, calyx lobes 2.0 × 1.2 mm; hermaphrodite tube 6 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm, calyx lobes 2.5 × 2.0 mm. Anther dehiscence introrse. Ovary sparsely hairy at summit. Fruits ovoid, fleshy, red, 5.0-6.0 × 3.5-4.0 mm. Seeds narrow-ovoid, 3.2 × 2.0 mm, crest thin.

SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *Pimelea barbata* from which it is distinguished by the leaves which are up to 22 mm long. *Pimelea mimosa* is geographically isolated (allopatric) from both *P. barbata* subspecies, and is one of two taxa now known to be endemic to Te Mata Peak - the other is *Chionochloa flavicans* f. *temata*.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island, Hawke's Bay (Te Mata peak)



In cultivation ex Te Mata Peak. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 08/09/2009, Licence: CC BY.



In cultivation ex Te Mata Peak. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 08/09/2009, Licence: CC BY.

HABITAT

On exposed limestone ridge and cliffs and scree slopes below them.

THREATS

Listed by de Lange et al.(2009) in Appendix 2 as Taxonomically Indeterminate/Nationally Critical *Pimelea* aff. *aridula* (a) (CHR 282959; Te Mata Peak) qualified OL (one Location) and RF (Recruitment Failure). *Pimelea mimos* Burrows (2011) stated that this species is now extinct in the wild and survives only in cultivation. However, recently (2011) *Pimelea mimos* was confirmed as still present on Te Mata Peak by NZPCN member Philip Smith. Although this is good news there is good data to show that the Te Mata peak population of this species has been in serious decline for many years, due to fires, weed invasion and over-collecting (ironically) by botanists.

GENUS

Pimelea

FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY

Pimelea mimos C.J.Burrows

SYNONYMS

None - first described in 2011

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

December - June

FRUITING

January - July

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily propagated from semi-hardwood cuttings and layered pieces. An excellent rockery plant which flourishes in a sunny, well drained rich soil. Intolerant of water logging. The species is known to tolerate moderate competition and humidity as well as both full sun and light shade where it has been cultivated around Auckland and the Waikato. Cultivation (at least in the short term) may be all that prevents this species from extinction

ETYMOLOGY

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

mimos: Derived from the Greek word *mimos*: meaning 'mimic'. Probably given in allusion to the similarity of this species to *Pimelea barbata*.

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL, RF

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Burrows, C.J. 2011: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 5. The taxonomic treatment of five endemic species with both adaxial and abaxial leaf hair. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 49: 367-412.

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 (4 October 2011).

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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

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27 May 2026