# Pimelea sporadica

## BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR
Jump to previous conservation statuses

## CATEGORY
Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION
Small shrub to 45cm tall with erect white-hairy branches bearing pairs of green fleshy poking out leaves, hairy white flowers and white fruit inhabiting coastal northern North Island south to East Cape. Leaves 4.5-6.5mm long by 3-3.7mm, cupped, underside shiny, leaves underneath flowers larger.

## FLOWER COLOURS
White

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION
A medium-sized, erect to suberect shrub, to 450 mm high. Branches stiff, divergent. Branching both sympodial and lateral but the former is most notable. Branchlets moderately densely covered by short, grey-white hair. Internodes 1.5–3.0 mm long. Older stems glabrous, grey-brown. Node buttresses short (0.2 mm) dark brown, lunate, masked by hair on young branchlets, moderately prominent on leafless branches. Leaves decussate, crowded on young branches, ascendant at first, then mainly patent and becoming deflexed, on very short (0.1–0.2 mm) red petioles, or sessile. Lamina relatively thick, stiff, ovate to oblong, 4.5–6.5 × 3.0–3.7 mm, glabrous, medium-green, glaucous, slightly keeled, or adaxially concave, margins slightly upturned, midvein not plainly evident abaxially, slightly sunken, acute, base cuneate or truncate. Stomata on adaxial surface only. Abaxial surface glistens. Inflorescences 3–6-flowered, terminal on leading branches, sometimes clustered. Involucral bracts 4, larger than adjacent leaves (7 × 5 mm). Receptacles very hairy, pedicels 0.2 mm, persistent. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white, covered in short, moderately dense hair outside; inside hairless; calyx lobes opening in salverform fashion. Female tube 3 mm long, ovary portion 2.1 mm, calyx lobes 1.2 × 0.8 mm; hermaphrodite tube 4 mm long, ovary portion 2.2 mm, calyx lobes 2.5 × 2.0 mm. Anther dehiscence semi-latrorse. Ovary with a sparse hair-covering at summit. Fruits broad-ovoid, fleshy white, opaque 4.5 × 3.4 mm. Seeds narrow-ovoid 2 × 1.4 mm.



Abaxial leaf surfaces, node buttresses and hairy stems. Hikurua / de Surville Cliffs, Te Paki. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 19/10/2009, Licence: CC BY.



Hikurua / de Surville Cliffs, Te Paki. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 26/02/2011, Licence: CC BY.

## SIMILAR TAXA
Pimelea sporadica is allied to P. telura of the Three Kings Islands from which 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

## DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. North Island: Te Paki (North Cape) to Cape Brett, Bay of Islands and near Maunganui Bluff. East Cape at Hicks Bay.

## HABITAT
Coastal headlands and rock outcrops (ultramafic, sandstone and basalt), in low scrub or on bare ground, also on consolidated sand. Most common on ultramafic rocks at North Cape.

## THREATS
Listed by de Lange et al. (2009: N.Z.J.Bot. 47: 61–96) as Pimelea aff. tomentosa (b) (AK 130893; Surville cliffs) and awarded the status of Tax. Indet. Naturally Uncommon. Burrows (2009) has expanded the concept of this species and suggests that it is secure at North Cape but vulnerable elsewhere, again without supporting evidence. As such this species status is probably better referred to as Data Deficient until better information becomes available.

## GENUS
Pimelea

## FAMILY
Thymelaeaceae

## AUTHORITY
Pimelea sporadica C.J.Burrows

## SYNONYMS
Pimelea laevigata Sol. ex Gaertn. pro parte

## ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS
No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

## FLOWERING
September - April

## FRUITING
October - April

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from semi-hardwood cuttings. An attractive species that does best in a well drained, fertile soil. It should be planted in a sunny situation. Plants are intolerant of shade.

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

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR
2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR
2009 | Data Deficient
2004 | Range Restricted
Jump to current conservation status

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Description from: 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.

## ATTRIBUTION
Description from: Burrows (2009)

## MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-sporadica/

**PDF DATE**
27 May 2026