

Pimelea tomentosa

FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY

Pimelea tomentosa (J.R.Forst. et G.Forst.) Druce

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

PIMTOM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 36

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DP, PD

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: PD

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: PD

2004 | Serious Decline

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Shrub with erect hairy branches bearing pairs of pointed green thin leaves that are hairy underneath, hairy white flowers and black fruit inhabiting the south to the northern South Island. Leaves 15-25mm long by 3-5mm wide, widest towards base. Flowers cause stem to branch.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to New Zealand, occurring throughout the North Island and northern South Island.

HABITAT

Open cliff tops, in scrub, frost flats, track sides and other seral habitats.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

An erect, grey-green, leafy shrub up to 1 m tall. Branches are slender and straight, with prominent leaf scars. Bark orange-brown. Young branchlets have whitish hairs. The grey-green, soft lance-shaped leaves are up to 25 mm long, with pale silky hairs on their undersides. The black fleshy fruits are very conspicuous, terminating the branch ends wherever flowers have been present.



A photo of Pimelea tomentosa. Photographer: A. J. Townsend, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Orokawa, Waihi Beach (February).
Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA

Pimelea prostrata is a common component of coastal cliffs and shrubland vegetation. It has several variable forms but the leaves are smaller (3 to 6 by 1 to 3 mm) than of *P. tomentosa*, its habit prostrate to sprawling and it has smaller, less conspicuous white fleshy fruits. *Sand daphne* (*Pimelea arenaria*) has a similar habit but only occurs in dunes and dune hollows, has shorter, more rounded leaves than *P. tomentosa* and smaller red fruits.

FLOWERING

Flowering specimens may be seen throughout the year.

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

Fruiting specimens may be seen throughout the year.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Very easy to grow from fresh fruit and semi-hardwood cuttings. This species forms an attractive small shrub and is tolerant of a wide range of soil types and conditions from drought prone sites to frosty situations. It does best in infertile soils.

THREATS

Habitat loss through development, land clearance, succession, track maintenance and competition with weeds.

ETYMOLOGY

pimelea: *Pimeleoides* means "resembling *Pimelea*", a genus in the family Thymelaeaceae (Greek, -oides = resembling, like).

TAXONOMIC NOTES

New Zealand *Pimelea* urgently require a full taxonomic revision using modern techniques. The treatments of Burrows (2009a, b et seq.) offer a useful foundation for further revision. Luckily *Pimelea tomentosa* is a well marked species and is not likely to require taxonomic adjustment.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 August 2003. Description modified from Allan (1961) but see also Burrows (2009)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington.

Burrows, C.J. 2009: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 3. The taxonomic treatment of six endemic hairy-leaved species. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 325-354.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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