

Pimelea traversii subsp. exedra

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp, DPS, DPT

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Low-growing sprawling shrub to 15cm tall with slightly hairy twigs bearing pairs of oval leaves, hairy white flowers and dry hairy fruit inhabiting ultramafic rocks on the Livingstone Range (Southland). Flowers 3–4 mm wide.

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A much-branched small to medium sized, spreading shrub up to 150 mm tall. **Branches** spreading; branchlets spreading or upright, with very short, sparsely hairy internodes. **Node buttresses** occupy the whole or most of the internode, dark brown, usually prominent after leaf fall, stems aging grey-brown, grey or black. **Internodes** 1–4 mm long. Leaves decussate, ascending to patent, often closely imbricate, on very short petioles (0.2 mm) or sessile. **Lamina** small light olive green, sometimes red-margined, thick and coriaceous, broad elliptic to broad ovate, sometimes oblong or obovate, 3–9 × 2–6 mm, slightly keeled, concave above, obtuse, base angustate or cuneate; margins thickened, slightly down-turned; midvein evident on under side, lateral veins obscure. **Stomata** only on abaxial side. **Inflorescences** many-flowered, pedicels 0.2 mm long, persistent. **Involucral bracts** 4, usually wider than the leaves (6–9 × 4–8 mm). Plants gynodioecious. **Flowers** hairy on outside; inside densely hairy in ovary portion and lower tube, sometimes sparsely hairy in upper tube; fragrant, white with reddish bases and tube. **Calyx lobes** open in salverform fashion. **Female tube** to 6 mm long, ovary portion 4 mm, calyx lobes 2.5 × 1.3 mm. **Staminodes** short, at mouth of tube. Female tube to 9 mm long, ovary portion 3 mm, calyx lobes 4 × 2.2 mm; anther filaments inserted below mouth of tube; anthers yellow. Hermaphrodite flower tubes 2–3 mm wide just below calyx lobes, calyx lobes 3–4 mm wide. Ovary with abundant hair at summit, less densely hairy to about half-way down. Fruits ovoid, green, drying brown, 4 mm long. Seeds ovoid, 3.5 × 1.6 mm. Dried hypanthia persistent and dispersing with fruits inside.

SIMILAR TAXA

Pimelea traversii subsp. *exedra* is (at least so far) known from one site on the Livingstone Range where it grows on ultramafic rocks. It differs from *subsp. traversii* by the smaller grow habit (up to 250 mm tall) and by having larger flowers. *Pimelea traversii* subsp. *boreus* is confined to north-eastern Marlborough where it grows on limestone and other calcareous rocks. It differs from *subsp. traversii* and *subsp. exedra* by its taller size, larger leaves and by the presence of sparse hairs on the stem internodes. As some of these distinctions seem fairly arbitrary, it is clear that further critical study of the range of variation in *P. traversii* using cytological and molecular techniques is needed.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (western Southland, where apparently confined to Mount Cerberus in the Livingstone Mountains).

HABITAT

Montane. On stable, ultramafic scree and amongst boulders.

THREATS

First recognised in June 2008. Very little is known about this plant. It is currently known from one small area of the ultramafic rocks on the Livingstone Range where it is said to be very uncommon. However, the habitat occupied by the plant is widespread on the mountains so further survey is needed to determine its exact status.

GENUS

Pimelea

FAMILY

Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY

Pimelea traversii subsp. *exedra* C.J.Burrows

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2008)

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October–April

FRUITING

December–June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Not known from cultivation—see *P. traversii* subsp. *traversii*

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.

traversii: Named after William Thomas Locke Travers (1819-1903) who was an Irish lawyer, magistrate, politician, explorer, naturalist, photographer. He lived in New Zealand from 1849 and was a fellow of the Linnean Society.

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

2012 | Data Deficient

2009 | Data Deficient

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Burrows CJ. 2008. Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 1. The taxonomic treatment of seven endemic, glabrous-leaved species. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 46(2): 127–176.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00288250809509760>.

ATTRIBUTION

Description based on Burrows (2008).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-traversii-subsp-exedra/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026