

Pleurophyllum speciosum

COMMON NAME

Great emperor daisy

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 1844)

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Pleurophyllum speciosum Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Dicotyledonous Herbs - Composites

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Range Restricted

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Auckland and Campbell Islands.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane herbfield

FEATURES

Radicals leaves 150-450 × 100-250 mm, appressed to ground or ascending, broadly obovate to subrhomboid, narrowed to broad base, coriaceous, margins remotely and indistinctly crenate to subentire, hydathodes hidden by tomentum; lateral veins ridged, almost as strong as midrib. 15-30; lamina loosely tomentose below, pilose on and near veins above and with numerous moniliform hairs on surface. Scapes stout, up to 1 m tall, tomentose above; lower leaves c.150 mm long, ± oblong, upper diminishing gradually to bracts. Capitula c.60 mm diameter including long ray-florets, c.25 in subcorymbose racemes; ray-florets pale purple to white, disk-florets purple. Involucral bracts ± clad in moniliform hairs, acute. Achenes densely strigose. Pappus-hairs not thickened above.

SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *Pleurophyllum criniferum* by the coriaceous, sessile or sessile leaves with broad bases, and by the conspicuous ray-florets. *Pleurophyllum hookeri* differs from both *P. criniferum* and *P. speciosum* by having leaves with both sides covered with silvery appressed tomentum.



A close up of flower. Photographer: Chris Rance



Pleurophyllum speciosum. Photographer: Vivienne McGlynn

FLOWERING

December – February

FLOWER COLOURS

Violet/Purple, White

FRUITING

January – May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild

THREATS

A naturally uncommon endemic. Widespread within its island habitats. The subantarctic islands on which it occurs are Nature Reserves and World Heritage sites with access only by permit, and strictly limited as to numbers of people.

ETYMOLOGY

pleurophyllum: From Greek pleuro- (rib, side) and phyllo- (leaf) components meaning 'ribbed-leaved'.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from: Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pleurophyllum-speciosum/>