Scandia geniculata

COMMON NAMES
scandia

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, PF
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS
White



Kakanui Mountains. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Long creeping, lianoid, woody to subwoody, aromatic perennial shrub froming interwoven, tangled masses up to 3 x 3 m (especially when sprawling through other shrubs). Branches few, somewhat wiry and pliant, grooved, yellow green to glaucous green. Leaves alternate, juveniles and reversion shoots 1-3-foliolate, adult leaves 3-lobed or simple; petioles up to 10 mm long, often twisted, flexuous; basal sheaths broad, eitherside furnished with 2 blunt lobes; leaflets up to 12 mm diameter, dark green, yellow-green or glaucous green above, glaucous below, orbicular, rhomboid to reniform, truncate to cordate at base, crenulate to subentire, subcoriaceous. Umbels axillary and terminal, compound up to 10 mm diameter, on peduncles up to 20 mm long; rays 2-6, 5-9 mm long, slender. Calyx-tetth minute; petals white, flexed at apices. Mericarps 4.5-7.5 mm long, semi-glossy, pale orange-yellow, brown, dark yellow or orange, oblong or oblong-ellptic, apex rounded and flattened, style remnant twisted or recurve, base cordate, ribs 5, the 2 commissural broadly and evenly winged.



Flowers and foliage scrambling through Muehlenbeckia complexa. Birdlings Flat. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 10/10/2010, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA
None. The remarkable lianoid growth habit is unique to this species, while the simple or 3-lobed, orbicular to reniform dark green, yellow-green to glaucous green leaves, and flexuose twisted petioles immediately distinguish this plant from any other apiaceous plants present in New Zealand.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. North and South Islands. In the North Island from Kapiti Island and Paekakariki south and east to about Tora, in the South Island from Marlborough to southern Otago.

HABITAT
Coastal to montane in rock strewn ground, at the base of talus slopes, on cliff faces, rock ledges and along river gorges, within tall and short tussock grassland and growing up through or intermixed with shrubs in grey scrub communities.

GENUS
Scandia

FAMILY
Apiaceae

AUTHORITY
Scandia geniculata (G.Forst.) J.W.Dawson

SYNONYMS
Peucedanum geniculatum G.Forst., Angelica geniculata (G.Forst.) Hook.f., Anisotome geniculata (G.Forst.) Hook.f., Gingidia geniculata

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
Yes

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
October - July

FRUITING
December - June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from fresh seed. An attractive and unusual scrambling scrub that makes an excellent hanging basket plant and ground cover for a free draining, sunny site. It dislikes humidity and excessive moisture.

WHERE TO BUY
Not commercially available.

ETYMOLOGY
geniculata: From the Latin geniculum 'knee', meaning 'on bended knee', often used in reference to plants with stems bent on an angle

NVS CODE
SCAGEN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 22

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DP
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Otago: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, NR, NStr, Sp Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington.
Dawson, J. W. 1967: New Zealand Umbelliferae. *Lignocarpa* gen. nov. and *Scandia* gen. nov. *New Zealand Journal of Botany 5*: 400-417.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 August 2004). Description based on Allan (1961 - as Angelica geniculata) and Dawson (1967)

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/scandia-geniculata/

PDF DATE

08 June 2026