

Senecio banksii

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

An attractive sometimes somewhat gangly daisy, with toothed leaves which clasp the stem. The yellow flowers are up to 2.5 cm across and are found in terminal bunches of up to 40. The plants are generally sparsely hairy and the green leaves often have undersides which have purple veins or are completely purple.

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Hardy, perennial herb. **Stems** angled to erect up to 1.5 metres. **Leaves** elliptic, or elliptic-oblong to obovate, (20-)40-120(-200) × (10-)20-50 mm; irregularly dentate to 1-2-serrate, lyrate-pinnatifid or 1-pinnatifid with oblong, few-toothed segments, or rarely crenately lobed, teeth or segments (3-)7-20 or more on each side. apetiolate and often cuneate to clasping at base, glabrous or moderately to densely lanate especially on lower surface, under side green to purple to blotchy combination of green and purple. **Uppermost leaves** smaller, narrower, often more or less oblong or lanceolate, less divided and more conspicuously clasping at base. **Inflorescences** terminal, of up to 40 capitula arranged corymbosely, overtopping leaves. **Supplementary bracts** 3-16(-20), 1.5-5 mm long. **Involucral bracts** 12-16(-19), glabrous, 2-5 mm long. **Ray florets** usually 7-13, very rarely as many as 22; ligules yellow, 3-8 mm long. **Achenes** with 1-3 rows of hairs in narrow grooves between broad ribs, not or scarcely narrowed to apex, 2-2.8 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA

Senecio colensoi differs from *S. banksii* mainly by the leaves which are densely covered with silvery-white lanate hairs. It is also a smaller, less heavily branched plant.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Te Ika-a-Māui | North Island, East of ranges mostly coastal from Mokohinau Islands in the North, to Castlepoint, Eastern Wairarapa, in the South, extending inland to the Central plateau.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (0-1100 m.a.s.l.). Well drained sites such as limestone and mudstone cliffs, boulders and outcrops.

GENUS

Senecio

FAMILY

Asteraceae



Coastal limestone cliff Tongio, Hawke's Bay.
Photographer: Mike Lusk, Date taken:
01/12/2009, Licence: CC BY-NC.

AUTHORITY

Senecio banksii Hook.f.

SYNONYMS

Senecio banksii Hook.f. var. *banksii*, *Senecio banksii* var. *velleia* Hook.f., *Senecio banksii* var. *scabrosus* Hook.f., *Senecio pumiceus* Colenso

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Some botanists now include *Senecio colensoi* within *S. banksii* but the published evidence for this is wanting, i.e. no formal study of this species pair has been presented, just an opinion based on a brief examination of herbarium specimens (Webb et al. 1988).

As such until a proper, critical study of the two species is undertaken it seems prudent to retain them as distinct, especially as in the field both species are easily distinguished and have been found growing sympatrically.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October – February (-June).

FRUITING

December - July.

CULTIVATION

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries

ETYMOLOGY

senecio: From the Latin senex 'old man' (probably referring to the bearded seeds)

banksii: Named after Sir Joseph Banks, 1st Baronet, GCB, PRS (24 February 1743 - 19 June 1820) was an English naturalist, botanist and patron of the natural sciences.

NVS CODE

SENBAN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 60

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, RR, Sp

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsidea, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.

Webb CJ, Sykes WR, Garnock-Jones PJ. 1988. Flora of New Zealand, Volume IV. Naturalised Pteridophytes, Gymnosperms, Dicotyledons. Botany Division, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Christchurch, NZ. 1365 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by MD Ward (May 18th 2026). Description adapted from Allan (1961).

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/senecio-banksii/>

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