Senecio glomeratus subsp. glomeratus

COMMON NAMES
fireweed

BIOSTATUS
Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

FLOWER COLOURS
Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Annual to short-lived perennial herb to 2 m tall. Stems erect or ascending to erect, moderately coarse-hairy, becoming sparsely coarse-hairy and/or appressed cottony or nearly glabrous upwards. Mid stem leaves more or less evenly spaced and sized, 50-200 mm long, dark glaucous green to dark green, elliptic to narrow-elliptic, length:width (l:w) ratio 2-7, coarse-dentate to deeply lobate, rarely not dissected, semiamplexicaul; margin with scattered or frequent denticulations or teeth; both surfaces usually coarse-hairy but commonly coarse hairs sparse or absent above mid stem; lower surface green or purple, above mid stem appressed, woolly, cobwebby or more or less glabrous. Uppermost leaves narrow-elliptic, lanceolate or linear, l:w ratio 3-10; dentate or margin appearing entire due to rolling. Unit Inflorescences of many capitula; total number of capitula per stem often 50-300, over topping variable; mature lateral peduncles mostly 4-13 mm long. Calycular bracteoles of capitula 6-12, 1.0-3.0 mm long; peduncle and margin of bracteoles cobwebby to densely woolly at anthesis; involucre 3.0-6.0 x 1.5-2.5 mm; involucral bracts 12-14, glabrous or basally slightly cobwebby, apex erect; stereomes (on drying) gently to moderately convex, green, black at apex, sometimes with a purple zone 1 mm long immediately below tip, sometimes entirely purple. Florets 26-50, c.80% female, dark sulphur yellow; corolla-lobes deltoid, thickened apically; corolla of bisexual florets 3.5-6.5 mm long, 5-lobed; corolla-lobes of female florets 2-4, mostly 0.2-0.3 mm long; corolla-limb commonly deeper cleft on inner face. Cypsela narrow obloid to narrow-ellipsoid, sometimes slightly clavate, < 1/3 of involucral bract length (1.0-1.7 mm long), commonly all medium to dark red-brown, with papillose hairs in lines or narrow bands, l:w ratio of hairs 3; pappus usually > 5 mm long.

SIMILAR TAXA
A distinctive and well marked species not easily confused with any other Senecio species present in New Zealand. The dark glaucous-green, elliptic, usually deeply toothed leaves with often dark purple undersides, distinctive coarse to cobwebbed hairs, and dark sulphur yellow florets serve to distinguish it. This species hybridises with S. hispidulus and S. quadridentatus.



Remutaka Rail Trail. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 03/12/2006, Licence: CC BY.



Riversdale. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 06/11/2006, Licence: CC BY.

DISTRIBUTION
Indigenous. Three Kings, North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands. Present in Australia

HABITAT
A weedy species of disturbed ground. Predominantly coastal and lowland but does extend to the subalpine zone. Tolerant of water logged and very dry habitats

GENUS
Senecio

FAMILY
Asteraceae

AUTHORITY
Senecio glomeratus Desf. ex Poir. subsp. glomeratus

SYNONYMS
Erechtites glomerata DC. nom. illegit., Senecio argutus A.Rich. nom. illegit., Erechtites arguta (A.Rich) DC., Erechtites quadridentata var. traversii Allan

TAXONOMIC NOTES
Rather variable, and in Australia two subspecies (subsp. glomeratus and subsp. longifructus) are now recognised. Chatham Island plants differ consistently from mainland specimens in having less divided often broader leaves and shorter capitula. They warrant further study.

ENDEMIC TAXON
No

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
Throughout the year but most plants peak in summer

FRUITING
Late summer to early winter but can present all year

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easy from fresh seed. Can become invasive

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING
FACU: Facultative Upland
Occasionally is a hydrophyte but usually occurs in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY
senecio: From the Latin senex ‘old man’ (probably referring to the bearded seeds)

NVS CODE
SENGLO

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 60

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

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Declining | Qualifiers: Sp, DPR, DPS, DPT, EF, PF, SO Help
Current regional threat status assessments prepared according to Crisp et al. (2025) are displayed when available. The Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland" Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.
Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help
Current regional threat status assessments prepared according to Crisp et al. (2025) are displayed when available. The Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.
Northland: 2026 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Naturally Uncommon Help
Current regional threat status assessments prepared according to Crisp et al. (2025) are displayed when available. The Northland conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation status of indigenous vascular plants in Northland | Taitokerau" Ford et al. 2026 report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Thompson, I.R. 2004: Taxonomic studies of Australian Senecio (Asteraceae): 1. The disciform species. Muelleria 19: 101-214.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (12 July 2005). Description based on Thompson (2004).

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/senecio-glomeratus-subsp-glomeratus/

PDF DATE

25 August 2026