

Shawia angulata

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp, DPR, DPS, DPT, PF, RF

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CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Small rounded tree bearing wavy leathery pale green oblong leaves inhabiting coastal sites in northern North Island. Twigs ridged and square in cross-section. Leaves very blunt at base, 4-7cm long by 2cm wide, edge very wavy, veins sunken into upper surface. Flowers white, in clusters. Seeds fluffy.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrub or small tree up to 5 m tall. Branchlets 4-angled, grooved, clad in tightly appressed to loose somewhat resinous white hairs. Leaves 4-7 cm, hairless, resinous yellow-green to dark green above, clad in firmly appressed, white to silvery-white hairs beneath, very leathery, oblong (rarely ovate-oblong), margins very strongly undulate. Inflorescences on stout stalks 3-5 cm long, capitula (flower heads) numerous, compact, each 4-5 mm long, with 2-5 florets (flowers) only. Cypsela (seed) surmounted by yellowish, very coarse, pappus (whorl of hairs making up the “parachute” above the seed).

SIMILAR TAXA

A distinct, though somewhat cryptic species, often confused with *O. albida* but distinguished by its much smaller stature, typical oblong leaves whose margins always strongly undulate (in shade or sun), usually resinous yellow-green foliage (though dark green colour variants occur throughout the species range), smaller, compact inflorescences, with shorter, fewer-flowered capitula, by the coarser pappus hairs, and by the chromosome number ($2n = c. 432$ in *O. angulata*, $2n = c. 324$ in *O. albida*).

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. Known with certainty from Te Paki, and in scattered sites along the western North Island coastline to near Mokau. At times it can be locally common - such as along the southern Kawhia Harbour. But it is more usually uncommon, often represented at any one site by only a handful of trees. Outside Te Paki there seem to be no genuine eastern North Island occurrences.

HABITAT

A coastal tree of rocky headlands, cliff faces, ultramafic shrublands and dune forests. Usually found in the most exposed situations.

THREATS

Olearia angulata is probably not threatened. However, it is not well known, easily confused with the more widespread *O. albida*, and so there are few recent accurate herbarium and site records.



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GENUS

Shawia

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Shawia angulata (Kirk) Saldivia & Nicol

SYNONYMS

Olearia angulata Kirk, Olearia albida var. angulata (Kirk) Allan

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

January to May

FRUITING

March to July

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from semi-hardwood cuttings, and from fresh seed.

CULTIVATION

Commonly sold by most retail nurseries, often as Olearia albida var. angulata

ETYMOLOGY

shawia: After Thomas Shaw (1694-1751), English scholar and traveller.

angulata: From the Latin angulatus ‘cornered or angular’

NVS CODE

OLEANL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = c.432

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Data Deficient

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REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Data Deficient Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland”](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan, H.H. 1961: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. I. Government Printer, Wellington.

Saldivia, P.; Nicol, D.A. 2025: Reinstatement, broader circumscription, and infrageneric classification of *Shawia* (Astereae, Celmisiinae), a large woody genus endemic to Australasia. *Phytoneuron* 49: 1–43.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 August 2003. Description modified from Allan (1961)
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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/shawia-angulata/>

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