

# Shawia crebra

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, RR

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## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Small tree bearing very large leathery leaves that have a rusty brown fuzzy underside inhabiting upland Waima Forest in Northland. Leaves 80-290 mm long. Flowers white with yellow centre, body 10-12 mm long. Seeds small, with a hairy tip.

## FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Small tree 4-7 m tall, with upright to spreading growth form. Bark light grey, somewhat rough and peeling off in small plates. Petiole 10-20 x 2-2.45 mm. Leaves clustered in groups of 8-12 at branch apices, alternate, 80-290 x 45-120 mm, elliptic, obovate to oblanceolate, coriaceous, upper surface dark green, under sides covered in red brown appressed tomentum; lamina margin somewhat sinuate, apex obtuse; base cuneate to attenuate. Inflorescence a lateral panicle of 210-220 capitula. Capitulum 10-12 mm long. Pedicel 7-15 mm long, densely invested in short fulvous hairs. Involucre cylindrical, bracts (30-)40-54, spiraled in 7-9 rows, light brown, recurved at maturity; outer bracts 1.5-2.6 x 0.8-1.4 mm, narrowly triangular, outer surface sparsely to moderately hairy, margins fimbriate. Florets 18-26 per capitulum. Ray-florets 10-15, pistillate; corolla glabrous, tube 2.7 mm long, ligulate with deflexed white limb 3.5-8 x 1.2-1.6 mm, 2-3-lobed at apex. Disc florets 8-11, hermaphrodite, corolla glabrous, white, tube 3.3 mm long, lobes 5, 1.5 x 0.6 mm. Seeds (cypselae) 1.7-3 x 0.4-0.5 mm, narrow-cylindric, brown, 5-6-ribbed, glabrous to sparsely hairy; pappus 3.5-4.5 mm, cream, finely scabrid.

## SIMILAR TAXA

None. Well marked by the small tree habit, very large leaves with red-brown undersides, and the large number of involucre bracts. This last character it shares with *O. pachyphylla* Cheeseman, which is otherwise a much smaller shrub, with smaller leaves and capitula which have 1-3 ray florets.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island, Waima Forest, where it is known from the local high points of Hauturu, Te Raupua and Mt Misery.

## HABITAT

In cloud forest. Now primarily on cliff faces, although this habitat is probably not entirely natural - the cliffs are acting as refugia from goats and other browsing animals, which periodically plague the only known habitats of this species.



Hauturu Trig, Waima Ranges. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 19/05/2022, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Hauturu Trig, Waima Ranges. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 19/05/2022, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## THREATS

Severely threatened by animal browse, especially as this species is known from only four very small populations located within vulnerable ridges crests frequented by feral goats, cattle, horses and possums. Despite ongoing wild animal control, this species remains very vulnerable to even small numbers of these animals.

## GENUS

Shawia

## FAMILY

Asteraceae

## AUTHORITY

Shawia crebra (E.K.Cameron & Heenan) Saldivia & Nicol

## SYNONYMS

Olearia crebra E.K.Cameron et Heenan

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

November to January

## FRUITING

January to April

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult except in damp cool climates. Can be grown from semi-hardwood cuttings and fresh seed. Very susceptible to phytophthora and verticillium wilt, and so prone to sudden collapse in gardens located within warm or humid climates.

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: RR

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: CD, RR

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

de Lange, P.J.; Heenan, P.B.; Norton, D.A.; Rolfe, J.R. & Sawyer, J.W.D. 2010: *Threatened Plants of New Zealand*. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch.

Heenan, P.B. & Cameron, E.K. 2002: A new species of *Olearia* from Waima Forest, Northland, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 40(4): 535-542.

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 the NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April (2006). Description by P.B Heenan (adapted from Heenan & Cameron 2002) and subsequently published in de Lange et al. (2010).

### NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Shawia crebra* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/shawia-crebra/> (Date website was queried)

### MORE INFORMATION

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

### PDF DATE

08 June 2026