

# Shawia quinquevulnera

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

## SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION

Bushy shrub with zig-zagging tangled branches bearing uneven-edge dark-green leaves that are white underneath inhabiting scattered open upland areas from the Central North Island to north Canterbury. Leaves 3.2-13.4mm long, about as wide as long, small teeth on edge may have a small purple blotch. Seeds fluffy, conspicuous.

## FLOWER COLOURS

Cream



Capitula and close up of foliage, Erua, Waimarino River Plain. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Fruitng branches. Erua. Feb 2003. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrub 2.2 x 2 m. branches upright to spreading, outer bark light grey to light grey-brown. Branchlets slightly to prominently flexuose, 2-3 mm diameter, light brown to cream brown, slender, terete, glabrous to sparsely hairy, diverging between 20 and 40 degrees, nodes up to 30 mm apart; brachyblasts sometimes present, up to 10 mm long. Leaves alternate, lamina 3-13.4 x 3-11.5 mm, broadly elliptic to orbicular, with cream to fulvous T-hairs; abaxial surface densely hairy; adaxial surface dull green, often red-purple toward base, sparsely hairy to glabrate, midrib and main lateral veins prominent on both surfaces; base cuneate to obtuse; margin sometimes slightly undulate, red-purple, with 2-7 teeth that are surrounded by red-purple blotches; apex obtuse; petiole 1.7-8.5 mm, sparsely to moderately hairy or glabrate. Inflorescences corymbose, capitula 3-5 per corymb; corymb moderately to densely covered with appressed T-hairs, rachis 2.8-26 mm long, pedicels 1.1-16 mm long; bracteoles subtending each capitulum 1-2.4 x 0.3-0.8 mm, spatulate, narrowly-lanceolate to linear, apex subacute to obtuse, base cuneate, sparsely to moderately hairy on both surfaces. Involucre cylindric; bracts 13-18, 3-4-seriate, spreading at maturity; midrib and central part of both surfaces green, outer part of both surfaces red to pink-red, abaxial surface of outer bracts with hairs on midrib, abaxial surface of inner bracts glabrous; apices acute to subobtuse, tufted with hairs; margins fimbriate in distal portion; bases cuneate to attenuate; outer bracts 0.8-1.3 x 0.3-0.6 mm, broadly elliptic to shortly-lanceolate; inner bracts 3-4.2 x 0.7-1 mm, lanceolate. Florets 3-8, female florets 2-4, limb white, 4.2-4.3 x 0.7-1.3 mm, glabrous; tube 2-2.8 mm, sparsely hairy; perfect florets 1-4, corolla usually with glandular hairs near apex; lobes 5, 0.6-0.8 x 0.3-0.4 mm, narrowly triangular, deflexed at maturity, white; tube 3.4-3.6 mm, sparsely hairy. Anthers 1.7-1.8 mm long, filaments 1.4-1.7 mm, glabrous. Style of female and perfect florets 3-3.1 mm; style arms 1-1.5 mm, cream. Cypselas 2-2.3 mm, henna to red-brown, narrowly oblong, somewhat compressed and angular in section; base obtuse, ribs 5, narrow, raised, moderately covered in white antrorse eglandular hairs. Pappus 2.5-4.5 mm long, pale orange-yellow.

## SIMILAR TAXA

None. The filiform, divaricate, flexuous branches and branchlets, and small elliptic to orbicular 2-7 toothed leaves, basally surrounded by prominent red-purple blotching are unique to this species.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South Islands but disjunct. In the North Island known from Te Urewera (Huiarau Range (Mt Maungapohatu and Mt Manuoha)), Erua, Mount Taranaki or Mount Egmont and adjacent Pouakai Range. In the South Island from several areas in North-west Nelson, and from a single site in North Canterbury (Thompson River).

## HABITAT

Montane to subalpine, on valley floors, on forest margins, clearings, amongst rocks, below cliffs and in subalpine scrub, often in poorly drained or permanently wet soils.

## THREATS

This is a highly disjunct species which in parts of its range can be very common and at others extremely scarce. At all known sites hybrids with *Shawia arborescens* (= *O. xcapillaris* Buchanan) are present. Despite its unusual distribution the majority of the known populations appear to be thriving. The largest populations are those centred on Mt Manuoha in Te Urewera.

## GENUS

*Shawia*

## FAMILY

Asteraceae

## AUTHORITY

*Shawia quinquevulnera* (Heenan) Saldivia & Nicol

## SYNONYMS

*Shawia capillaris* (Buchanan) Saldivia & Nicol (= *Olearia xcapillaris* Buchanan), *Olearia quinquevulnera* Heenan

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

October - January (-February)

## FRUITING

January - April (-May)

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Can be grown from fresh seed and cuttings but generally difficult to maintain. Seems to survive best in a permanently damp soil in a sheltered site. Dislikes humidity and drought will generally kill it. Very prone to sudden collapse in hot weather and prone to soil borne fungal diseases such as *Phytophthora* and *Verticillium* wilt.

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

This plant has been featured as a Plant of the Month – see [Trilepidea: NZPCN newsletter for February 2012](#) for the full story.

## ETYMOLOGY

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

**quinquevulnera**: With five marks

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 108$

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: CD, DP

2004 | Sparse

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan, P. B. 2005: *Olearia quinquevulnera* (Asteraceae: Astereae), a new species name from New Zealand, and observations on its relationships in *Olearia*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 43: 753-766.

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 adapted from Heenan (2005).

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Shawia quinquevulnera* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/shawia-quinquevulnera/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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

## PDF DATE

27 May 2026