Pachycladon exile

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, DPT, EF, OL
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS
Green, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Slender, grey-green, thread-like perennial herb, up to100 mm tall. **Basal leaves** 7–20 mm long, simple, initially densely invested with stellate hairs, becoming glabrescent with age; early basal leaves elliptic, entire or with a few blunt serrations, later leaves pinnatifid to pinnatisect, lobed 2–4 times in opposite to subopposite pairs; lamina, 4–9 × 1.5–5 mm. **Stem leaves** 1–4, lower ones similar to basal leaves, upper 3 × 0.5 mm, linear, minutely serrated. **Inflorescences** racemose, 40–100 mm long, glaucescent, 3–10-flowered. **Pedicels** 8–12 × 0.4–0.5 mm, glabrous. **Sepals** 1.8–2.4 × 1–1.1 mm, green with pale margins, ascending, oblong to elliptic, subacute. **Petals** 3–5 × 0.3–1 mm, white, obovate to obovate-spathulate, subacute. **Stamens** 4–6, anthers green to green-brown. **Style** 0.1–0.2 mm, green. **Siliques** 15–25 × 0.7–1 mm, green to brown-green, terete, usually curved, glabrous. **Seeds** 0.6–0.9 mm, pale brown, short-oblong.

Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Date taken: 25/01/2022, Licence: CC BY-NC.

On limestone. Photographer: Jane Gosden, Date taken: 26/02/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA
Similar to *Pachycladon cheesemanii* Heenan et A.D.Mitch. but smaller in all parts and with an ovary circular (terete) in cross-section.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (South Canterbury and North Otago. Formerly present in a number of sites along the Waitaki River and at Cape Wanbrow. Now apparently confined to a single site near Awahokomo Creek).

HABITAT
A species apparently favouring dry, exposed limestone rock and associated rendzina soils. It seems to require open ground to thrive and is intolerant of much competition with other plants.

THREATS
Threatened by the very small number (< 50 individuals) of plants known from the wild. These plants are confined to a single limestone outcrop where they are at risk from the spread of weeds such as *Festuca rubra,* hawkweed (*Pilosella* spp.) and cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*), and erosion caused by excessive rabbit browsing pressure on the associated rock outcrop vegetation.

GENUS
Pachycladon

FAMILY
Brassicaceae

AUTHORITY
Pachycladon exile (Heenan) Heenan et A. Mitch.

SYNONYMS
Ischnocarpus exilis Heenan, Pachycladon exilis (Heenan) Heenan et A.D.Mitch. orth.var.

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
October–November

FRUITING
October–December

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from fresh seed. A short-lived, fairly non-descript plant which does best in a sunny exposed situation, growing within a fertile, free draining, soil. This is more of a plant for a specialist as it is not particularly attractive, and very prone to fungal diseases and insect damage. The foliage is edible.

WHERE TO BUY
Not commericially available.

ETYMOLOGY
exile: From the Latin exile (thin, slender, feeble, meager)

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 20

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL
2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL
2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL
2004 | Threatened – Nationally Critical
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Otago: 2025 | Regionally Extirpated Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
de Lange PJ, Heenan PB, Norton DA, Rolfe JR, Sawyer JWD. 2010. Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Canterbury University Press, Christchurch. 471 p.
Molloy BPJ, Edgar E, Heenan PB, de Lange PJ. 1999. New species of *Poa* (Gramineae) and *Ischnocarpus* (Brassicaceae) from limestone, North Otago, South Island, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany 37(1)*: 41–50. https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1999.9512610.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 July 2007. Description by P.B. Heenan and published in de Lange *et al.* (2010) - see also Molloy et al. (1999)

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pachycladon-exile/

PDF DATE

25 May 2026