

Helichrysum dimorphum

COMMON NAME

everlasting daisy

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Helichrysum dimorphum Cockayne

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Lianes & Related Trailing Plants - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

HELDIM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Rare climbing shrub with untidy brownish twigs inhabiting dry inland Canterbury. Leaves of two types: small (5mm) and narrow with a white underside on the base of twigs and scale-like and embedded in fuzzy stem towards the tip of twigs. Flowers small, dry, at tip of twigs.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island (presently known only from the Poulter, Esk and Puffer catchments where they drain into the Waimakariri River; however, there is also an old record from Piano Flat, Southland).

HABITAT

A species of lowland to montane situations. Usually found on river terraces and alongside river gorges. Always in grey scrub, where it is primarily associated with matagouri (*Discaria toumatou* Raoul) shrubs.



At Poulter Bridge (November). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Cave Stream. Photographer: Melissa Hutchison, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Weakly lianoid, sparingly branched scrambler, producing numerous fine stems up to 8 m long. **Juvenile and shade leaves** 5 × 2 mm, brown or grey-black, spreading, ovate-oblong, apex subacute and mucronate, upper leaf surface glabrous, under surface covered in white wispy hairs. **Leaves of terminal branches or exposed branches** overlapping, scale-like, appressed, 3 × 1 mm, linear-lanceolate, strongly keeled, tomentose, base clad in dense, floccose tomentum. **Capitula** subcylindric, terminal, 3.5 mm diameter, phyllaries (bracts) in 2–3 series, outer bracts oblong, inner narrow-oblong, margins finely toothed. **Florets** 15–25. **Achenes** (seeds) narrow-oblong, glabrous, pappus hairs slender and numerous.

SIMILAR TAXA

None

FLOWERING

September–February

FRUITING

October–March

LIFE CYCLE

Pappate achenes are dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and semi-hardwood cuttings. Established plants layer easily. Does best in semi-shade or planted at the base of a shrub through which it can sprawl. Does not like humid climates.

THREATS

Seriously threatened by aerial spraying for gorse (*Ulex europaeus* L.), and by scrub fires. This species often grows within and through matagouri (*Discaria toumatou*) so it is easily overlooked. Matagouri is easily burned and considered to be a pest in some parts of the country. Clearance of matagouri may have been a factor in the historic decline of *Helichrysum dimorphum*, and remains a serious potential threat to this day.

ETYMOLOGY

helichrysum: From the Greek words helios 'sun' and chrysos 'gold', referring to the colour of the flowers of some species

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally sold in garden centres.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 2 October 2003. Description modified from Allan (1961).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Allan HH. 1961. Flora of New Zealand, Volume I. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Psilopsida, Lycopsida, Filicopsida, Gymnospermae, Dicotyledones. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 1085 p.
Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/helichrysum-dimorphum/>