

Olearia pachyphylla

COMMON NAME

thick-leaved tree daisy

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Olearia pachyphylla Cheeseman

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

OLEPAC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 108

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: CD, OL, St

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL

2009 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: OL

2004 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Very rare shrub with large broad leathery pale leaves that are white underneath currently only know from some headlands near Ōpōtiki in the North Island. Leaves 55–130mm long. Flowers with short white petals and with a body 10–20mm long, in large clusters not projecting much beyond leaves.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: (northern North Island from Coromandel Peninsula to East Cape, very uncommon in Waikato; it was known from rock outcrops near the summit of the main range dividing Coromandel township from Whangapoua Harbour, and more recently (1992) it has been collected from bluffs near Cook's Beach).

HABITAT

Strictly coastal. Growing amongst low scrub on steep cliffs and along stream banks.



Olearia pachyphylla foliage, April, Opape, Eastern Bay of Plenty. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Close up flowering capitula, Opape, Eastern Bay of Plenty (April). Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Shrub up to 3 m tall, with spreading branches. **Bark** greyish-brown to silvery grey, flaking in short curling strips. **Branchlets** 4-angled. **Leaves** clustered at branchlet tips, 55–130 × 35–90 mm, broadly elliptic, ovate to ovate-oblong, coriaceous, upper surface dark green glossy green, lower surface clad in fine, appressed silvery-white to light brown tomentum, apex obtuse, base obtuse or oblique, petioles 4–15 mm long. **Inflorescence** corymbose, with 15–50 capitula; capitulum 10–20 mm long; peduncle 8–15 mm long. Involucre cylindrical, bracts 34–44, in 7–9 rows; bracts 1–6 mm long, lower surface densely covered in long, spreading, shaggy, grey to grey-white hairs, upper surface glabrous. **Florets** 7–12 per capitulum. **Ray florets** 2–4, pistillate, irregularly spaced; corolla glabrous, tube 5.0 mm long, ligulate with white limb 4.0 × 1.5 mm, 2–3-lobed at apex. **Disc florets** 5–9, hermaphrodite, pale yellow; tube 6.0 mm long, glabrous; lobes 5, 1.3–1.5 × 0.5 mm, outer surface sparsely hairy. **Achenes** narrowly cylindrical, light brown, 9–12-ribbed, with sparse white hairs and sessile glands; pappus 5.0–7.5 mm long, pale orange-yellow.

SIMILAR TAXA

Olearia furfuracea and *O. townsonii* both grow taller (up to 5 m) but the best way to distinguish them from *O. pachyphylla* is by the number, shape, and ornamentation of the scales (involucral bracts) that enclose the base of the flower heads. *O. pachyphylla* has 35–40 of these scales arranged in 10 tiers enclosing the capitula while *O. townsonii* has these in tiers of 3–4 and *O. furfuracea* in tiers of 2–3. The scales of *O. pachyphylla* are also diagnostic as their undersides are densely covered in long, grey silky hairs.

FLOWERING

January–April.

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

March–May.

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed and semi-hardwood cuttings. An attractive species for a well drained, sunny location. Plants are prone to verticillium wilt and phytophthora.

THREATS

Habitat loss through coastal development, and weed encroachment. Goats are believed to be the main reason for this species extinction at one of its eastern Bay of Plenty sites.

ETYMOLOGY

olearia: Named after Johann Gottfried Olearius, a 17th-century German scholar, writer of hymns and author of *Specimen Florae Hallensis*

pachyphylla: Thick-leaved

WHERE TO BUY

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for the NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2006. Description by P.B Heenan and P.J. de Lange and subsequently published in de Lange et al. (2010).

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.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/olearia-pachyphylla/>