Pimelea prostrata subsp. prostrata

COMMON NAMES
pinātoro, New Zealand daphne, Strathmore weed

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Not Threatened
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

SIMPLIFIED DESCRIPTION
Low growing shrub with sparsely hairy branches to 300mm long bearing pairs of blue-green narrow leaves that which join the stem at a small ridge, hairy white flowers and white fruit inhabiting open sites south from near Auckland. Leaves 3-6mm long by 1.5-4mm wide, tip rounded.

FLOWER COLOURS
Red/Pink, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
A small shrub; stems prostrate, often thin and flexible, creeping on open areas or in low vegetation, pendent on banks, cliffs, up to 300 mm long. Stems may be partially buried on sandy substrates; adventitious roots may develop on these, or on stems in moist habitats. Branching sympodial and lateral. Branchlets uniformly yellowish-brown to brown, usually smooth but sometimes muricate, glabrous except in leaf axils and on receptacles, or sparsely to moderately clad in short, silky hair. Internodes 1–4 mm long. Older stems grey-brown to dark grey. Node buttresses light to medium brown, occupying part or all of the internode; occasionally prominent on leafless branches. Leaves close (exposed or drier sites) or distant (shaded sites), patent, on short red petioles. Lamina glaucous, often red-margined, usually 3–6 × 1.5–4 mm, thin, elliptic to broad-elliptic, flat, tip obtuse. Inflorescences 5–8-flowered, terminal on branchlets. Involucral bracts to 5.6 × 4.2 mm. Flowers relatively sparsely hairy outside, inside hairless, on very short pedicels (0.2 mm). Female tube 2.5 mm long, ovary portion red, 2 mm; calyx lobes 1.2 × 1.2 mm; h tube 4.8 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm; calyx lobes 2 × 1.5 mm. Ovary moderately hairy at summit. Fruits broad ovoid to globose, fleshy, white, opaque 4.2 × 2.8 mm. Seeds narrow-ovoid 2.5 × 1.5 mm, crest very thin.

Te Paki. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 17/11/2007, Licence: CC BY.

Pimelea prostrata. Photographer: John Barkla, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA
Plants of the Pimelea prostrata complex are distinguished by the prostrate to decumbent growth habit; by the glabrous to sparse or moderate hair covering on young stem internodes and by the thin and pliable, completely glabrous leaves with stomata clearly visible on both leaf surfaces. Pimelea prostrata subsp. prostrata is distinguished from subsp. seismica, subsp. thermalis, subsp. ventosa and subsp. vulcanica by the node buttresses elongate to covering the entire internode length; glabrous to moderately hairy young stems, and by the flat leaves with obtuse leaf -tips.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. North Island: South Auckland, Taranaki, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, eastern Wairarapa, and near Wellington. South Island: Marlborough, Nelson, Westland, Canterbury, Otago, Southland

HABITAT
Coastal to montane. In open sites, such as coastal gravel, sand dunes, and mudstone cliffs; on ultramafic rock, mudstone, sandstone, marble, limestone, gravel river floodplains; vegetated places, in open scrub, low grassland, Schoenus marsh, Sphagnum bog, around tarn margins.

GENUS
Pimelea

FAMILY
Thymelaeaceae

AUTHORITY
Pimelea prostrata (J.R.Forst. et G.Forst.) Willd. subsp. prostrata

SYNONYMS
P. laevigata Sol. ex Gaertn pro parte; P. prostrata f. parvifolia Allan

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
September - May

FRUITING
October - July

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from semi-hardwood cuttings and rooted pieces. Seed is difficult to germinate. Best grown in a well drained soil in full sun. An excellent plant for the rockery.

ETYMOLOGY
pimelea: from Greek pimelē, meaning “lard” or “soft fat,” presumably referring to the oily seeds or fleshy cotyledons.
prostrata: Prostrate

NVS CODE
PIMPSP

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 36, 72, 90

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Not Threatened
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Data Deficient Help
The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland" Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.
Otago: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: TL, DPS, DPT, RR 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

Burrows CJ. 2009. Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 2. The endemic *Pimelea prostrata* and *Pimelea urvilliana* species complexes. *New Zealand Journal of Botany 47(2)*: https://doi.org/10.1080/00288250909509804. 163–229

ATTRIBUTION

Description from: Burrows (2009).

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pimelea-prostrata-subsp-prostrata/

PDF DATE

08 July 2026