



Australina pusilla subsp. pusilla

Common Name(s):

none known

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Indigenous. New Zealand.: North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands. In the North Island (local north of Auckland, common elsewhere). Abundant in the South Island. Known also from Australia (Victoria and Tasmania)

Habitat:

Coastal to montane. Usually in dense riparian forest where it colonises the ground. Often found growing admixed with bitter cresses (*Cardamine* spp.), nettles (*Urtica incisa*) and forest sedges like *Isolepis reticularis* and *Schoenus maschalinus*.

Features*:

Dark green to grass green perennial herb producing numerous prostrate and ascending stems, up to 250 mm high and 0.8-1.5 mm diameter. Young stems, petioles and peduncles with an indumentum of stiff, appressed hairs or occasionally also with finer, more erect hairs. Leaves alternate, petiolate; stipules 0.5-1.0 mm long, linear to lanceolate, sometimes ciliate, up to 1 mm long; petiole up to 1.0-1.4(-11.0) mm long; lamina 11-16 x 12-16 mm, orbicular (sometimes broader than long), base cuneate or truncate, margin with 1-4 blunt or rounded teeth, apical tooth almost always broader than long, with 2-4 pairs of lateral nerves, usually glabrous on both sides, occasionally with lines of appressed hairs between the veins, and abaxially sometimes with scattered, appressed hairs on the veins. Male inflorescences 1-3-flowered, usually restricted to the axils of the upper leaves (rarely terminal), borne on pubescent or glabrescent peduncles up to 6 mm long. Flowers up to 1.0 x 1.5 mm, densely pubescent to subglabrous. Female inflorescences 1-9-flowered, sessile, axillary in the leaf axils below those of the male inflorescences. Flowers symmetrical, slightly flattened, with 4 ± marked ridges, subglabrous, apex with 2 marked teeth between which the filiform style protrudes. Fruit an achene, enclosed in a persistent perianth; purple-brown, dark purple-brown to almost black, glabrous, 0.8-1.2 mm long, broadly ovate, sometimes elliptic, obovate or almost circular, asymmetric, biconvex, apex rounded to a narrow pointed (sometimes curved) projection, base rounded to a short, tapering, rounded or flattened, often curved projection, surface dull or shiny, densely papillate or colliculate.

Flowering:

September - December

Fruiting:

December - April

Threats:

Not Threatened. However scarce north of the Waikato.

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (18 February 2013). Description adapted from Friis & Wilmot-Dear (1988) and Webb & Simpson (2001)

References and further reading:

Friis, I.; Wilmot-Dear, C.M. 1988: A revision of the tribe Forsskaoleae (Urticaceae). *Nordic Journal of Botany* 8: 25-59.

Webb, C.J.; Simpson, M.J.A. 2011: *Seeds of New Zealand Gymnosperms and Dicotyledons*. Christchurch, Manuka Press.

Anonymous. 1955. Botanical at home *Australina pusilla*. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal*, 13: 5-6

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2062



Caption: Tararua Range

Photographer: John Barkla



Caption: Coromandel, October

Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth