



Senecio biserratus

Common Name(s):

fireweed

Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

Distribution:

Indigenous. North, South and Stewart Islands. Present also in Australia

Habitat:

Coastal and lowland habitats, in early successional habitats. This species is often associated with dune systems where it usually grows amongst *Muehlenbeckia complexa* (A.Cunn.) Meisn.

Features*:

Annual to short-lived subsucculent perennial herb up to 1 m tall but usually much less. Stems erect, basally sparsely or sometimes moderately coarse-hairy; indumentum reducing upwards. Mid stem leaves more or less evenly spaced and sized, 50-150 mm long, length:width ratio 1.5-4, dark green to yellow green, elliptic to narrow-elliptic or lanceolate, coarse-dentate to deeply lobate; segments 3-9 per side extending along much of length, tending to be larger in proximal two-thirds, antrorse, deltoid to near oblong; base usually auriculate, with auricles divided, semiamplexicaul; margin serrulate or denticulate, with denticulations frequent; both surfaces glabrous or sparsely hispid to scabridulous, rarely coarse-hairy; lower surface pale green to purple, more or less glabrous except on veins. Uppermost Leaves similar, l:w ratio 3-6, sometimes widest at auricles. Unit Inflorescences of many capitula; total number of capitula per stem often 50-200; not overtopping or only moderate; mature lateral peduncles mostly 5-10 mm long. Calycular bracteoles 3-6, 1.0-2.0 mm long; peduncle and margin of bracteoles more or less glabrous at anthesis; involucre 4.5-7.5 x 1.0-1.5 mm; involucre bracts predominantly 7-10, glabrous, apex erect; stereomes of dry material flat to slightly convex, thin, green, minutely purpled at apex. Florets 12-20, pale yellow, c.70% female; corolla-lobes nearly oblong, thickened apically; corolla of bisexual florets 4.5-6.0 mm long, 4-5-lobed; corolla-lobes of female florets 3-4, 0.2-0.3 mm long. Cypselas 2.0-3.2 mm long, dark brown, narrow oblong to oblong-ellipsoid, with papillose hairs in dense bands, l:w ratio of hairs 3. Pappus 5-6 mm long.

Flowering:

August - January

Fruiting:

September - May

Threats:

Not threatened - however it has declined from large parts of the northern part of its range.

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (12 July 2005). Description based on Thompson (2004).

References and further reading:

Thompson, I.R. 2004: Taxonomic studies of Australian *Senecio* (Asteraceae): 1. The disciform species. *Muelleria* 19: 101-214.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2256



Caption: In cultivation ex Woodhill. Oct 2007.

Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



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