



Pimelea orthia

Common Name(s):

Pimelea

Current Threat Status (2009):

Data Deficient

Distribution:

Endemic. North Island: North Auckland (scattered localities from Mangonui to Auckland City), South Auckland-King Country, Coromandel Peninsula, eastern Bay of Plenty (Whakatane, Kohi Point, Ohiwa Harbour); East Cape – Gisborne (near Ngatapa), Mahia.

Habitat:

Coastal to lowland. In open scrubland and grassland overlying leached, infertile soils, or on dunes and rock outcrops.

Features*:

Fastigate to bushy, few to much-branched shrubs, up to 900 mm tall, often shorter, with relatively few, stiffly erect or divergent to prostrate, straight main branches and thin, usually ascendant, lateral branches of varied form. On different plants these may be short and straight, long and straight, or short and repeatedly sympodially branched. Young branchlets clad in sparse to moderately dense, appressed, grey-white, short, silky hair; internodes 0.5–2.5 mm, older stems glabrous, grey or brown (bark wrinkled on dried specimens). Node buttresses brown, extending part way down or the full length of the internode, not very prominent on leafless stems. Leaves decussate, ascendant, then patent or deflexed, on short (0.5 mm) red petioles, often persistent. Lamina flat to slightly keeled, relatively thin, 5–8 × 2–3 mm (smaller on lateral branchlets), elliptic or ovate, glabrous, glaucous or pale green, acute, but tip blunt, or obtuse. Stomata abundant on adaxial and abaxial sides. Inflorescences terminal on main stems or lateral branchlets, 2–12-flowered, loose. Involucral bracts 4, similar in size to adjacent leaves or slightly wider (7 × 3 mm), partly hiding the flowers. Receptacles moderately hairy. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white on short pedicels (0.8 mm); outside of tube and calyx lobes moderately hairy; inside hairy in upper tube and ovary portion. Female tube 2 mm long, ovary portion wrinkled, 1.7 mm long, calyx lobes 1.2 × 1.0 mm; hermaphrodite tube 3.2 mm long, ovary portion 1.5 mm, calyx lobes 2.7 × 1.4 mm. Anther dehiscence semilatrorse. Ovary summit sparsely hairy. Fruits fleshy, ovoid, white, opaque, 5 × 2.9 mm. Seeds broadovoid 2.1 × 1.4 mm. Crest thin.

Flowering:

September - May

Fruiting:

November - July

Threats:

Probably highly threatened but until Burrows (2009) established the exact taxonomic status of this plant it has been widely confused with a range of other members of the *P. prostrata* complex. Recent (2000+) records have come from near Mangawhai, near Whakatane, Ohiwa Harbour and at Mahia Peninsula. Most of these sites are roadside or trackside habitats vulnerable to clearance. However, a definitive threat status cannot be given until better information is obtained, until such time this species probably warrants the current threat listing awarded it by de Lange et al. (2009) where it is listed under Appendix 2, as Data Deficient under the illegitimate name *Pimelea prostrata* var. *erecta* Cheeseman

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (13 December 2009). Description adapted from Burrows (2009).

References and further reading:

Burrows, C.J. 2009: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 2. The endemic *Pimelea prostrata* and *Pimelea urvilliana* species complexes. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 163–229.

de Lange, P.J.; Norton, D.A.; Courtney, S.P.; Heenan, P.B.; Barkla, J.W.; Cameron, E.K.; Hitchmough, R.; Townsend, A.J. 2009: Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand (2008 revision). *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 61–96.

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2396



Caption: Cable Bay
Photographer: Kevin Mathews



Caption: North Cape. Feb 2011.
Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe