



Pimelea acra

Common Name(s):

Pimelea

Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Whangarei Heads (Mt Aubrey, Manaia and Bream Head), Hauturu (Little Barrier Island))

Habitat:

On exposed lava and eroding conglomerate ledges of forested old andesitic or basaltic volcanoes; sometimes on boulder heaps below cliffs.

Features*:

A medium-sized, erect to suberect, much-branched, compact or spreading shrub, up to 450 mm tall. Young branchlets usually densely clad in fine, appressed hair; internode length 2 mm or less; older stems glabrate to glabrous, greyish-brown to dark grey. Node buttresses short (0.3 mm) lunate, glabrous, dark brown, hidden by hair on young stems, moderately prominent on leafless stems. Leaves decussate, on short (0.3–1.0 mm), often red petioles, ascendant, becoming patent, not persistent; lamina 5.0–7.0 × 2.0–2.5 mm, medium green, ovate to elliptic, usually slightly keeled, uniform in size, acute, base cuneate; glabrous above with sparse or sometimes moderately dense hair below and then mainly on midvein, margins, and tip. Midvein prominent below, lateral veins not evident. Stomata usually only on upper side of leaf; some individuals have a few stomata on the lower leaf surface. Inflorescences terminal on branchlets, 4–8-flowered. Involucral bracts 4, similar in size to or wider than adjacent leaves (6–10 × 3–4 mm). Receptacle with short, dense hair. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers white, on short pedicels (0.5 mm), often circumscissile, hairy on outside, inside hairless or sometimes with a few hairs on calyx lobes or in tube. Female tube 3.5 mm long, ovary portion 2.5 mm, calyx lobes 2.2 × 1.7 mm ascendant or opening in salverform fashion; Hermaphrodite tube 5 mm long, ovary portion 2.3 mm, calyx lobes 3 × 2 mm. Anther filaments inserted at mouth of tube; anther dehiscence semi-latorse. Ovary with cluster of short hair at summit. Fruits broad-ovoid, fleshy, red, 5 × 4 mm. Seeds ovoid 3.6 × 2.2 mm.

Flowering:

July - October

Fruiting:

September - December

Threats:

Pimelea acra has been listed as *Pimelea* (b) (AK 165780; Mt Manaia) in de Lange et al. (2004) and de Lange et al. (2009) where it was awarded the status of Naturally Uncommon, qualified RR (Range-Restricted). Currently it is believed secure at its stronghold on Mt Manaia and Bream Head. It is also locally common on Mt Aubrey in one small area. As an unpalatable cliff plant *Pimelea acra* is not directly threatened by browsing animals. It is possible that weeds may be an issue for this species at some sites. Its status on Hauturu (Little Barrier Island) needs further investigation as it is only known there from one 1997 gathering made from Herekohu (The Thumb).

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (30 August 2009). Description adapted from Burrows (2009).

References and further reading:

Burrows, C.J. 2009: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 3. The taxonomic treatment of six endemic hairy-leaved species. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 47: 325-354.

de Lange, P.J.; Norton, D.A.; Heenan, P.B.; Courtney, S.P.; Molloy, B.P.J.; Ogle, C.C.; Rance, B.D.; Johnson, P.N.; Hitchmough, R. 2004: Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 45-76.

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For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=6644



Caption: Manaia, Whangarei Heads
Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



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