



Pimelea sericeovillosa subsp. *alta*

Common Name(s):

Pimelea

Current Threat Status (2012):

Naturally Uncommon

Distribution:

Endemic. New Zealand: South Island, Pisa Range

Habitat:

Subalpine to alpine. Usually in open fell-field on mountain tops, ridge crests and in open stonefields. occasionally found at lower levels in short short-tussock grassland.

Features*:

A low, much-branched, dull-green loose cushion-forming shrublet to 50 × 250 mm. with brown, clustered, appressed, leafy, densely villous young branchlets, and with older, gnarled, leafless stems often visible (these often leafless and glabrous, dark brown to black, often partly buried by windblown silt or sand). Internode length 0.3-0.6 mm. Branching mainly sympodial and radiating from a stout main stem up to 15 mm in diameter. Node buttresses lunate, dark brown, masked by hairs on young stems, not prominent on leafless branchlets. Leaves decussate, ascending, imbricate, sessile or with very short petioles (0.2 mm). Lamina medium to pale green, elliptic to oblong, 2.2-4.0 × 1.0-1.3 mm, adaxially concave, mid-vein not evident, abaxial surface very densely covered with straight, grey-white, moderately long hairs; adaxial surface sparsely hairy, sometimes glabrous, obtuse, base cuneate, stomata on both adaxial and abaxial surfaces. Inflorescences terminal, with 1 or 2, sometimes 3, flowers. Involucral bracts 4, the same size as, or slightly wider than adjacent leaves (2.3 × 1.5 mm). Receptacle usually with abundant long hairs. Plants gynodioecious. Flowers 1-2-3 per inflorescence, white, on very short (0.1 mm) pedicels, very hairy outside, inside hairless. Female tube 2.5 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm, calyx lobes 1.0-1.2 × 0.5 mm; hermaphrodite tube 3-4 mm long, ovary portion 2 mm, calyx lobes 1.5 × 0.8-1.0 mm. Anther dehiscence introrse. Ovary with dense short hairs on summit, less dense to half way down. Fruits not seen.

Flowering:

October - January

Fruiting:

Unknown

Threats:

See comments about the "Conservation Status" opinions and their validity as offered by Burrows (2011) under the Fact Sheet for *Pimelea sericeovillosa* subsp. *sericeovillosa*. As *Pimelea* (d) (CHR 472016; Pisa) *Pimelea sericeovillosa* subsp. *alta* was listed by de Lange et al. (2009; p. 91) as Taxonomically Indeterminate/Naturally Uncommon. This assessment may still be appropriate as it was based on critical field data obtained by Department of Conservation Staff surveying the Pisa Range. However, due to the recircumscription of *P. sericeovillosa* by Burrows (2011) and comments regarding possible introgression between subsp. *alta* and *P. aridulla* and *P. oreophila* (comments which seem to be solely based on limited observations), this assessment may need to change.

*Attribution:

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (29 September 2011). Description adapted from Burrows (2011).

References and further reading:

Burrows, C.J. 2011: Genus *Pimelea* (Thymelaeaceae) in New Zealand 5. The taxonomic treatment of five endemic species with both adaxial and abaxial leaf hair. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 49: 367-412.

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.

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