



## *Euphorbia paralias*

### Common Name(s):

sea spurge

### Current Threat Status (2009):

Exotic

### Distribution:

Exotic. New Zealand: North Island, North Aotea Harbour Heads. Indigenous to the Northern Hemisphere (Europe, Mediterranean) species now naturalised throughout South Africa and Australia (Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania)

### Habitat:

Coastal - on sandy beaches and sand dunes. A strand-line species.

### Features:

Erect, ± fleshy, tap-rooted, glabrous, glaucous (sometimes tinged red), perennial herb forming dense swards 0.3–0.7(–1.0 m) tall. Rootstock stout, crown woody, 10–20(–30) mm diam. Stems 1–8 (–12), branching from rootstock apex, each divided into 3–5(–10) terminal fertile branches; these dichotomously branched 1–3× again; basal stems woody, bark dark grey to brown; otherwise ± fleshy, pliant, initially glaucous, often maturing reddish-grey to maroon. Leaves fleshy, crowded, closely to loosely imbricate, becoming ± patent with age, increasing in size toward stem apex; lamina (basal) 3.8–4.9(–6.1) × 1.03–2.3 mm, narrowly oblong to obovate-oblong, apex sharply acute, sometimes shortly acuminate, base obtuse, margins entire, adaxially concave, lamina inrolled when dry; lamina (mid stem and upper stem) (6.1–)16.0(–26.2) × (2.4–)3.8(–16.3) mm, obovate-oblong, elliptic-oblong to ovate, apex acute (rarely obtuse), often shortly apiculate, apiculus reddish 0.2–0.4 mm long, base obtuse (sometimes weakly cordate), margins entire; lamina of fertile branches 10.05–14.5(–20.1) × 9.2–13.6(–16.2) mm, suborbicular orbicular, to rhomboid or reniform, apex acute or obtuse, often minutely apiculate, apiculus 0.1–0.3 mm long, base obtuse to weakly cordate, margins entire, adaxially concave. Cyathia solitary, borne in upper forks or terminal; pedunculate, peduncles 0.3–0.5(–10.0) mm long; involucre c.1.5 mm long, yellow-green, campanulate; glands 4, 0.75–1.0 mm long, dull orange to yellow, lunate, emarginate, with 2 short, widely spreading, horns. Male flowers (1–)2–3, sessile or minutely pedicellate, pedicel, 0.01–0.1 mm long, stamen 1, filament 0.1–0.22 mm long; anther 1, 0.2–0.36 mm long, pollen dark yellow. Female flowers solitary, trilocular, each locule bearing one ovule, styles 3, 0.2–1.1 mm long, yellow, each divided into 2 short dark yellow stigmas. Capsule 3.0–5.0 × 4.5–6.0 mm, dark green maturing grey-brown, cartilaginous, depressed-globose, deeply sulcate, keels granulate. Seeds (2.3–)2.5–3.5(–3.6) mm long, pale grey, whitish grey or white, ovoid-globose, smooth, caruncle minute, reniform.

### For more information, visit:

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=6748](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=6748)



**Caption:** Near Aotea Harbour. Apr 2012.

**Photographer:** Sarah Beadel



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