

Biodiversity



Number 25

Coastal tree daisy (*Olearia solandri*)

DESCRIPTION

The coastal tree daisy forms a shrub up to 4m tall, with a trunk up to 30cm in diameter. In exposed places, it will remain a small bushy shrub. It has small, narrow leaves with margins that are strongly rolled under. The stems and undersides of the leaves are covered with sticky yellow hairs called tomentum; this gives coastal tree daisy a distinctive yellow-green colour.

The small, vanilla-scented, daisy-like flowers are present from late summer through autumn and are usually plentiful and highly visible from a distance. Seeds are wind-dispersed, with each having its own parachute of fluffy hairs.

DISTRIBUTION

The coastal tree daisy occurs naturally in the North Island and the northern South Island. It is commonly found in the coastal and semi-coastal zone, and occasionally also inland at altitudes of up to 500m above sea level. It is very wind-hardy and is typically found growing on the edge of tidal estuaries, lake margins, rocky outcrops, dry hillslopes and shrubland. A pioneer species, it colonises disturbed, often low-fertility, sites. It is tolerant of salt-laden wind.



COASTAL TREE DAISY IN TARANAKI

Coastal tree daisy is relatively uncommon in Taranaki. It is generally restricted to exposed locations which get good light on the margins of coastal estuaries and lakes. Historically, it has been recorded in the coastal zone around the Taranaki ring plain from Mohakatino in the north to the Waitotara river mouth in the south. The Taranaki Regional Council recommends planting coastal tree daisy along estuary and lake margins within the coastal zone throughout the region.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- Fence off areas of scrub and forest to prevent browsing by cattle, sheep and wild animals.
- When planting coastal tree daisy, ensure plant material is eco-sourced to preserve our local form.



CONSERVATION

Coastal tree daisy is not a nationally threatened or endangered plant. It is recognised as being regionally distinctive as it is uncommon in the Taranaki region.

THREATS

- Trampling and browsing by domestic and feral cattle, sheep, pigs and possums.
- Coastal development.
- Coastal erosion.
- Weed invasion.
- Human and vehicle traffic on beaches.

QUICK FACTS

- Coastal tree daisy is one of a number of small leaved, twiggy, divaricating species of *Olearia* which play host to the caterpillars of tiny native moths.

