

# Orthoceras novae-zeelandiae

## COMMON NAME

horned orchid

## SYNONYMS

*Diuris novae-zeelandiae* A.Rich., *Orthoceras caput-serpentis* Colenso, *Orthoceras rubrum* Colenso, *Orthoceras solandri* Lindl., *Orthoceras strictum* f. *viride* Hatch

## FAMILY

Orchidaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Orthoceras novae-zeelandiae* (A.Rich.) M.A.Clem., D.Jones et Molloy

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

## NVS CODE

ORTNOV

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 42, 44

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island, South Island (mainly westerly and recorded as far south as Hokitika).

## HABITAT

Coastal to lower montane (up to 800 m a.s.l.). Usually in very sunny sites on open, free draining soils or clay banks with little associated taller vegetation. Often found in urban areas on mostly bare roadside cuttings.



Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 13/12/2001, Licence: CC BY.



Tararua Forest Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 01/02/2008, Licence: CC BY.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Terrestrial, usually solitary, glabrous, perennial tuberous herb. Plant at flowering up to 900 mm tall. **Tuber** up to 50 × 10 mm ovoid, ovoid-ellipsoid. **Stem** fleshy dark green, red-green, to brown-green, stiffly erect, rather wiry, axis of raceme usually flexuous. **Leaves** fleshy, suberect to spreading, 10–20 × 3–6 mm, dark green, dark red-green to brown-green, basal third closely sheathing, linear-lanceolate to linear, channelled, apex acute. **Inflorescence** racemose up to 200 mm long, 2–12-flowered. **Flowers** more or less equidistant subtended by closely sheathing leaf-like bracts. **Perianth** colour variable, mostly green or red-green, sometimes greenish-yellow. **Dorsal sepal** uppermost, 10–15 × 9–14 mm, very broad, and arched over column, distinctly cucullate and deeply concave, subacute; lateral sepals 20–50 mm long, 0.5 mm diameter, narrow-linear, semi-terete, channelled, erect to divergent. **Petals** very short, narrow-oblong, flat, apex mostly notched, occasionally entire, more or less hidden under dorsal sepal. **Labellum** spreading, deflexed, firmly fleshy to almost coriaceous, green, red-green, yellow or black, trilobed, margins smooth, lateral lobes broad, oblique; mid-lobe larger, ovate; median callus yellow, restricted to near base, shortly conical with a thickened inturned, rounded apex, base of mid-lobe usually bearing two small calli. **Column** short, column-wings present as two lateral, linear processes, more or less papillose, almost as long as anther. **Anther** dorsal, taller than stigma, pollinia ill-defined, pollen granular. **Stigma** disc-shaped; rostellum prominent, acute.

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to native orchids of New Zealand

## SIMILAR TAXA

None.

## FLOWERING

July–March

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Red/Pink

## FRUITING

November–May

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in a sunny, free draining soil. Excellent in pots. Should not be removed from the wild.

## ETYMOLOGY

**orthoceras**: Straight horn

**novae-zeelandiae**: Of New Zealand

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

The distinction between *O. novae-zeelandiae* and *O. strictum* R.Br. seems very slight and dubious. *Orthoceras strictum* is said to differ by its longer floral bract and more narrowly pointed labellum. Similar plants have been found in New Zealand, and there is often a gradation between broad and more narrowly pointed labellum apices present within populations.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Moore LB, Edgar E. 1970. Flora of New Zealand, Volume II. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Monocotyledones except Gramineae. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 354 p.

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/orthoceras-novae-zeelandiae/>