Archidium elatum

COMMON NAMES
moss

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2025 | Threatened – Nationally Critical | Qualifiers: Sp, CI, TO
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Non-vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Mosses

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Dark brown-green or yellow-brown tufted moss. Individual plants 7-15 mm tall, stems simple or weakly branched, stem leaves 0.7-1 x 0.25-0.30 mm erecto-patent, spreading, occasionally reduced to bracts below. Plants sterile, archegonia present, antheridia unknown; perichaetium terminal, perichaetial leaves erect to erecto-patent, channelled, 1.3-1.5 x 0.30-0.35 mm, narrowly deltoid, linear-lanceolate or lanceolate, base ovate, apex acute to broadly acuminate, margins plane or recurved, entire, occasionally serrulate; costa broad, flattened, 88 micrometre (69–115 micrometre) wide in median section, filling 1/3 or more of leaf base, subpercurrent to percurrent; median cells firm-walled, varying in shape from quadrate, trapezoidal to tabular or narrowly rhomboidal; mostly tabular to rhomboidal 20-50 x 9-12 micometre, upper cells mostly rhomboidal, reaching 50-70 micrometre along margins, alar and basal cells uniformly quadrate to short-tabular, smaller than median cells, 14-28 x 9-14 micrometre.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic to New Zealand, known from two sites in the North Island (Ahipara and the Bay of Islands) and from one site on the main Chatham (Rekohu) Island (Otauwae Point).

SUBSTRATE DETAILS
Basalt rock (at three sites)

THREATS
Kikuyu grass (*Pennisetum clandestinum* Chiov.) has been identified as a threat and possible cause of extinction at one site. The possibility that A. elatum has been overlooked over large parts of its range must be considered highly likely.

GENUS
Archidium

FAMILY
Archidiaceae

AUTHORITY
Archidium elatum Dixon & Sainsbury

SYNONYMS
None



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ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

FRUITING
Capsules unknown in this species

PLANT OF THE MONTH
This plant has been featured as a Plant of the Month – see Trilepidea: NZPCN newsletter for August 2007 for the full story.

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2014 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP, Sp, TO
2010 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered | Qualifiers: DP, Sp, ?TO
2004 | Threatened – Nationally Endangered
Jump to current conservation status

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING
Sainsbury, G.O.K. 1955: A Handbook of the New Zealand mosses. Royal Society of New Zealand Bulletin 5: 1-490.

ATTRIBUTION
Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange August 2007. Description based on Sainsbury (1955).

MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/archidium-elatum/

PDF DATE
27 May 2026