Bulbinella gibbsii var. gibbsii

COMMON NAMES
Gibbs's Māori onion, Gibbs's lily, Gibbs's onion

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Monocots

FLOWER COLOURS
Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Subdioecious, diminutive, summer green, fleshy, lily up to 300 mm tall. **Leaves** up to 30 mm wide, strap-like, reddish green to dark green, fleshy. **Peduncle** mostly shorter than raceme. **Raceme** mostly conical (rarely cylindric), the axis visible between flowers. **Pedicels** 10–20 mm long, swollen below flower, elongating slightly after anthesis. **Bracts** long-acuminate, notably longer than pedicel in flowering and fruiting material. **Flowers** 10–14 mm diameter, dark yellow, numerous, densely crowded; tepals patent, becoming erect and hardening as fruit matures. **Stamens** 6, < tepals; anthers mostly well filled with pollen. **Ovary** not stipitate. **Capsules** broad-ovoid. **Seeds** dark and narrowly winged.



Mt Rakeahua, Rakiura National Park, 680 m asl. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 02/01/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.

SIMILAR TAXA
Allied to *Bulbinella rossii* (Hook.f.) Cheeseman which is a much more robust species (up to 1 m tall) endemic to the Auckland Islands and Campbell Island/Motu Ihupuku. *Bulbinella rossii* has consistently cylindrical racemes. The axis is very stout and more or less obscured by the densely crowded, distinctly dioecious flowers. The stigma is prominently capitate. *Bulbinella gibbsii* var. *balanifera* L.B.Moore is a larger plant than var. *gibbsii* with longer peduncles and pedicels. The pedicels greatly exceed the subtending bracts. The ovary and capsules are barrel-shaped rather than broadly ovoid, with bases that only gradually narrow and which are scarcely stipitate. *Bulbinella gibbsii* var. *balanifera* is found in the North Island and South Island but not on Stewart Island/Rakiura.



Mount Rakeahua, Rakiura National Park, 680 m asl. Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Date taken: 02/01/2020, Licence: CC BY-NC.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. Stewart Island/Rakiura.

HABITAT
Coastal to alpine (mainly alpine) in damp ground, in cushion bogs and seepages, sometimes fringing ponds and small ephemeral pools.

THREATS
No apparent threats. Listed because it occupies a small geograpgic area.

GENUS
Bulbinella

FAMILY
Asphodelaceae

AUTHORITY
Bulbinella gibbsii Cockayne var. gibbsii

SYNONYMS
None

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
January–February

FRUITING
February–March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Difficult–should not be removed from the wild. Has been cultivated with limited success in the more southerly parts of the country.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING
FACW: Facultative Wetland
Usually is a hydrophyte but occasionally found in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY
bulbinella: Little bulb
gibbsii: Named in honor of Frederick G Gibbs (1866-1953)

NVS CODE
BULGVG

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 14

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: RR
2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon
2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon
2004 | Range Restricted
Jump to current conservation status

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.

ATTRIBUTION
Description modified from Moore and Edgar (1970).
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MORE INFORMATION
https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/bulbinella-gibbsii-var-gibbsii/

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