

Bulbophyllum tuberculatum

SYNONYMS

Adelopetalum tuberculatum (Colenso) D.L.Jones, M.A.Clem. et Molloy

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Bulbophyllum tuberculatum Colenso

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

NVS CODE

ADETUB

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 38

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Sparse

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North and South islands, from Kaitaia south to Wellington, and in Marlborough and North West Nelson. Probably more widespread than this as easily overlooked.

HABITAT

An epiphytic plant, usually found on trunks and inner branches of trees in lowland or coastal districts. Favoured trees seem to be matai (*Prumnopitys taxifolia* (D.Don) de Laub.), kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides* (A.Rich.) de Laub.), rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum* Lamb.), totara (*Podocarpus totara*), tawa (*Beilschmiedia tawa* G.Benn.), hinau (*Elaeocarpus dentatus* (J.R.Forst. et G.Forst.) Vahl) and rewarewa (*Knightia excelsa* R.Br.), It is always found with grey lichens of the genus *Rimelia* Hale et A.Fletcher, *Physcia* (Schred.) Michx., *Heterodermia* Trevis., and *Ramalina* Ach., and often threaded through the climbing fern *Pyrrhosia eleagnifolia* (Bory) Hovenkamp.



Bulbophyllum tuberculatum close up of flowers.
Photographer: Andrew Townsend



Bulbophyllum tuberculatum close up of flowers.
Photographer: Eric Scanlen

FEATURES

Epiphytic orchid forming tightly clumped masses up to 60 mm diameter on canopy branches and trunks of forest trees. Roots numerous, threaded tightly through encrusting lichens and other epiphytic plants. Pseudobulbs conspicuous, 6-18 x 3-6 mm, green to dark green, ovoid to narrowly ovoid, turgid, smooth surface often spotted with white mealy cells. Apex surmounted by tightly clasping, much reduced scale leaf. Leaf appearing sessile, usually solitary (rarely 2), up to 50 x 5 mm, dark green to purple-green, linear-oblong, acute, glabrous. Flowers racemose, 1-several-flowered, peduncle 10-20 mm long arising from base of pseudobulb; floral bracts triangular, pedicels very short. Ovary minutely tuberculate. Perianth 4 mm long, all parts except labellum, white to whitish-pink. Dorsal sepal narrow-ovate; lateral similar but broader to triangular-ovate, slightly pouched at base. Petals smaller, ovate, obtuse. Labellum mobile on long slender claw; oblong-obovate to sub-hastate, orange to red, fading toward a yellow base; proximal part with 2 raised ridges, margins recurved at apex. Column short, 2-winged at apex. Capsules ovoid.

SIMILAR TAXA

None in New Zealand.

FLOWERING

(September) - November - April

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

November - August

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Not well known. Pieces taken from fallen branches have been successfully cultivated in standard orchid mix, or when strapped to a suitable branch, and these plants have frequently flowered. It is probably very easy to grow

THREATS

Probably quite common, but easily overlooked, and current records imply it is naturally sparse. There have been some documented instances where accessible populations have been stripped bare by plant collectors, which is probably the only serious threat to this species. For this reason it is better to use caution when disclosing new findings.

ETYMOLOGY

tuberculatum: Bearing little tubers

TAXONOMIC NOTES

The transfer of *Bulbophyllum tuberculatum* to *Adelopetalum* was made with minimal explanation. Recently Australian orchidologists have rejected *Adelopetalum* in favour of a broader circumscription of *Bulbophyllum* (P. Weston *pers. comm.* 2014), this view is accepted here.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007: Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Anonymous. 1962. *Bulbophyllum tuberculatum* Col. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal* 19: 1-2.

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

Moss, T.C. 1968. Notes on *Bulbophyllum tuberculatum*(Orchidaceae). *Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin* 35: 36-39

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/bulbophyllum-tuberculatum/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/bulbophyllum-tuberculatum/>