

Chiloglottis cornuta

COMMON NAME

bird orchid, ant orchid

SYNONYMS

Simpliglottis cornuta (Hook.f.) Szlach.

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Chiloglottis cornuta Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

NVS CODE

SIMCOR

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 40

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. In New Zealand recorded from North, South, Stewart, Chatham, Antipodes, Campbell and Auckland Islands. Present also in Australia where it is known from New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania

HABITAT

Widespread in usually moist, partially shaded situations in lowland to montane (up to 1000 m a.s.l.) indigenous forest or shrubland, rarely fringing wetlands or found growing within mires and peat bogs. Rarely subalpine to alpine. Often found in plantation forestry, especially under pines where it may on occasion grow intermixed with *Simpliglottis valida* (D.L.Jones) Szlach.



Pinehaven, Upper Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



Pinehaven, Upper Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

FEATURES

Terrestrial, glabrous herbs. Tubers ovoid. Plant at flowering 40–100 mm tall, at fruit up to 300 mm tall, the mature fruiting capsule held well above the floral bract. Stem erect, fleshy. Leaves 2(-3), usually closely spaced together, otherwise spreading, fleshy, petiolate, petioles short (5–10 mm long); lamina 30–100 x 10–30 mm, green, oblong, oblong-lanceolate to elliptic; apex acute to subacute, base cuneate to attenuate. Flowers 1(-2), erect, usually wedged between or just above leaves. Floral bract with long cylindrical sheath; bract attached well below ovary, the intervening portion elongating as fruit ripens; lamina equal in length or greater than ovary, green, sometimes larger, giving the appearance of a third leaf. Perianth 15 mm tall, green, more or less fleshy. Sepals shortly tailed (caudate); dorsal sepal ovate-lanceolate; lateral sepals much narrower, more or less channelled. Petals slightly shorter again, ovate-lanceolate, erect to spreading. Labellum broadly to narrowly triangular, on irritable short claw; margins entire, calli dark green to reddish, more or less globose, with a mainly median/central distribution, two of the calli often forming inturned auricles near the base. Column elongate, erect, almost as long as lip, the foot ending in a transverse thickening; wing narrow to level of stigma, from there wider and extending almost to anther apex in a broad, usually incurved lobe. Anther terminal, apiculate, prominent, discoid, pollinia coherent, finely granular. Stigma prominent, discoid, rostellum small, median.

SIMILAR TAXA

Chiloglottis validus is somewhat similar vagrant species to New Zealand. It is a much larger plant with dark green to almost brown green leaves and greenish-purple to purple-brown flowers. The labellum is ovate-cordate rather than broadly to narrowly triangular, and much more irritable. *Chiloglottis validus* is strictly insect-pollinated, and lacking its natural pollination vector rarely sets seed in New Zealand. *Chiloglottis cornuta* is predominantly selfing, so it freely produces capsules. Both species may be found growing together.

FLOWERING

September - May

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Red/Pink

FRUITING

October - July

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in a cool, moist, deep, well drained, gritty soil, mulched with well rotted pine needles and bark. Does better in dappled light than full sun. An attractive species which flowers readily in cultivation.

ETYMOLOGY

cornuta: Knobbed

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Recently (Miller & Clements 2014) have shown that the segregate genera *Myrmechila* and *Simpliglottis* proposed by Szlachekto (2001) and Jones & Clements (2005) should be reduced to synonymy within *Chiloglottis*. That treatment is followed here.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (10 April 2007). Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Jones, D.L.; Clements, M.A. 2005: Miscellaneous Nomenclatural Notes and Changes in Australian, New Guinea and New Zealand Orchidaceae. *The Orchadian* 15: 33–42.
- Miller J.T.; Clements, M.A. 2014: Molecular phylogenetic analyses of Drakaeinae: Diurideae (Orchidaceae) based on DNA sequences of the internal transcribed spacer region. *Australian Systematic Botany* 27: 3–22.
- Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.
- Szlachekto, D.L. 2001: Genera et Species Orchidaliium 1. *Polish Botanical Journal* 46: 11–26.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/chiloglottis-cornuta/>