

# Chiloglottis valida

## COMMON NAMES

bird orchid, ant orchid

## BIOSTATUS

Native

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS


Orchids

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Violet/Purple

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Terrestrial orchid forming diffuse to dense leaf patches in shaded forests amongst leaf litter and amongst mosses. Flowering plants 40–100 mm tall.

**Leaves** petiolate, 20–50–(100) × 9–30 mm, dark green above, paler beneath, broadly elliptic, margin entire. **Flower** solitary, greenish-purple to purple-brown. **Dorsal sepal** 19–25 mm long, erect, incurved, broadly obovate-spathulate. **Lateral sepals** 16–22 mm long, erect in basal ½ then recurved, divergent or parallel, broadest near the base, tapering to apex. **Petals** 16–20 mm long, incurved or weakly divergent, asymmetrically ovate-lanceolate. **Labellum** on short claw, 13–16 mm long, broadly ovate-cordate; calli black, glossy, in central proximal  of lamina; main central gland stalked, erect and curved forwards, flanked by 1–3–(4) pairs of calli (sometimes sparse present or absent), the basal ones stalked, others sessile, apical gland sessile. **Column** widely winged in upper half, wing ≥ than anther. **Capsule** rarely produced in New Zealand plants unless hand fertilised, ellipsoid 10–20 mm long, held well above plant on greatly elongated peduncle.

## SIMILAR TAXA

*Chiloglottis cornuta* is somewhat similar but is a much smaller plant with green flowers. The labellum of that species is strongly deltoid. Unlike *C. valida* which is strictly insect-pollinated, and whose pollination vector is apparently absent in New Zealand, *C. cornuta* is predominantly selfing, so it freely produces capsules. Both species may be found growing together.

## DISTRIBUTION

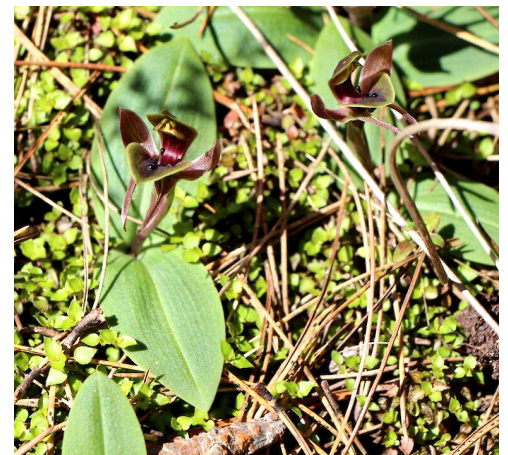
Indigenous. New Zealand: North Island (Iwitahi Forest), South Island (Richmond Forest, Hanmer Springs and Fiordland). Also Australia.

## HABITAT

In New Zealand known from old plantation forests at Iwitahi and Hanmer in stands dominated by *Pinus nigra* Arnold where it has been found in dense colonies amongst drifts of semi-rotted pine needles. Also recorded from the Richmond Range and Fiordland National park where it was found growing mossy logs and leaf litter within mixed beech (Nothofagaceae) forest.



Iwitahi. Photographer: Bill Campbell, Date taken: 06/12/2015, Licence: CC BY.



Iwitahi. Photographer: Bill Campbell, Date taken: 28/10/2013, Licence: CC BY.

## THREATS

Plant collectors and logging of plantation forestry pose the major threats to this species. In both cases neither threat is major because the few accessible sites are well guarded by members of the New Zealand Native Orchid Group. This species does not readily set seed in New Zealand because its insect-pollination vector is apparently absent. However, occasional capsules are formed, and people have hand-pollinated some plants at Iwitahi. Nevertheless the bulk of the wild populations are clonal and the lack of sexual reproductive is the main threat, and also the main reason why it is listed as a vagrant.

## GENUS

Chiloglottis

## FAMILY

Orchidaceae

## AUTHORITY

Chiloglottis valida D.L.Jones

## SYNONYMS

Simpliglottis valida (D.L.Jones) Szlach.

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

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.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

October–December

## FRUITING

January–February (rarely seen in New Zealand populations)

## 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.

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to native orchids of New Zealand](#)

## NVS CODE

CHIVAL

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 40

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

2012 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

2009 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant | Qualifiers: SO

2004 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Vulnerable | Qualifiers: DPT, OL Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the “[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)” Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Jones DL. 1991. New taxa of Australian Orchidaceae. *Australian Orchid Research* 2: 43.

<https://australianorchidfoundation.org.au/australian-orchid-research-volume-2/>.

Jones DL, Clements MA. 2005. Miscellaneous Nomenclatural Notes and Changes in Australian, New Guinea and New Zealand Orchidaceae. *The Orchadian* 15(1): 33–42.

<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/298513#page/1/mode/1up>.

Miller JT, Clements MA. 2014. Molecular phylogenetic analyses of Drakaeinae: Diurideae (Orchidaceae) based on DNA sequences of the internal transcribed spacer region. *Australian Systematic Botany* 27(1): 3–22.

<https://doi.org/10.1071/SB13036>.

Szlachekto DL. 2001. Genera et Species Orchidalium 1. *Polish Botanical Journal* 46(1): 11–26.

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared fro NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (10 April 2007). Description based on Jones (1991) supplemented with observations made on live plants.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Chiloglottis valida* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/chiloglottis-valida/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

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

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026