

Chiloglottis valida

COMMON NAME

bird orchid, ant orchid

SYNONYMS

Simpliglottis valida (D.L.Jones) Szlach.

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Chiloglottis valida D.L.Jones

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 40$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

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

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

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

2004 | Non-resident Native – Vagrant

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.




4km from Iwitahi old reserve. Photographer: Eric Scanlen, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Iwitahi. Photographer: Bill Campbell, Date

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.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

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.

FLOWERING

October–December

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Violet/Purple

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.

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 Iwitihi. 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.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Miller & Clements (2014) have shown that the segregate genera *Myrmechila* and *Simpliglottis* proposed by Szlachetko (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 based on Jones (1991) supplemented with observations made on live plants.

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.
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- 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.
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- Szlachetko DL. 2001. Genera et Species Orchidaliu 1. *Polish Botanical Journal* 46(1): 11–26.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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