

# Corunastylis pumila

## COMMON NAMES

yellow gumland leek orchid

## BIOSTATUS

Native

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: Sp, DPS, DPT, SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Yellow green, reed-like orchid of open clay pans, gumland scrub and dry cliff and roadside clay banks, up to 450 mm tall. **Base of plant** clad in persistent, brown, somewhat fibrous sheaths of old scale-leaves; these enclosing current tuber and remnant tubers of past seasons growth.

**Stem** 1–2 mm diameter, yellow-green, erect, very rush/reed-like, leafless almost to inflorescence. **Leaf** solitary, much < raceme, at first broadly involute, tapering, about equal to inflorescence in length, only rarely overtopping it. **Inflorescence** a raceme of 3–30 closely spaced flowers.

**Perianth** pale, greenish to greenish-yellow, opening into a short wide bell bent on the ovary so as to face downwards. **Dorsal sepal** 3 mm long, concave, broadly ovate, acuminate; laterals slightly longer, very shortly connate at base, more or less gibbous, spreading widely above, broad-elliptic, shortly mucronate. **Petals** shorter, membranous, with longer hair-tip. **Labellum** about equally long, articulate by a curved claw to the long column-foot; limb broadly oblong, upper surface grooved and more or less covered by 2 longitudinal papillose calli; margin not ciliate. **Lateral processes of column** about as long as anthers; apices broad and irregularly laciniate, the anterior margin minutely papillose. **Anther** subsessile, overtopping rostellum, apiculate. **Stigma** set above column base, of equal or slightly longer length.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Superficially similar to *Corunastylis nuda* (Hook.f.) D.L. Jones et M.A. Clem. from which it differs by its yellow-green to green (rather than red-green to dark green) stem and leaf; longer leaf, drooping rather than horizontal, open, almost campanulate, pale yellow rather than reddish flowers, and greenish rather than red labellum lacking ciliate margins.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (from Te Pahi south to about Kawhia, East Cape and the Bay of Plenty), Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island. Reported from western Nelson.



*Corunastylis pumila*. Photographer: Kevin Matthews, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Near Patetonga. Photographer: Eric Scanlen, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## HABITAT

A species that requires open, sparsely vegetated, usually relatively unfertile habitats. Most recent gatherings come from gumland scrub, particularly in sites that have been burned frequently. It is also abundant in sites kept open through substrate infertility, the frequency of natural disturbances caused by, for example, geothermal activity, or along habitats that are artificially maintained, such as track and roadsides. It is very common on Great Barrier Island (Aotea Island), its probable stronghold, where it flourishes on the skeletal soils and bare rhyolitic rock left after extensive kauri (*Agathis australis* (D.Don) Lindl.) logging and repeated burning.

## THREATS

*Corunastylis pumila* has a current distribution that is typical of sparse taxa. However, this is unlikely to be completely natural. Much of this species' current distribution is undoubtedly human-induced and it cannot be denied that this species has undergone a massive range reduction over the last 100 or so years, as the open clay pans and gumland scrub it flourishes in have been reduced to tiny, effectively non-functional units now given over to natural succession to taller vegetation. On consideration of available evidence this species is still declining but perhaps less than it was in the recent past. Nevertheless, *C. pumila* probably does not warrant 'At Risk – Naturally Uncommon' status and it may require a worse conservation status to more accurately reflect its now greatly reduced range.

## GENUS

Corunastylis

## FAMILY

Orchidaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Corunastylis pumila* (Hook.f.) D.L. Jones et M.A. Clem.

## SYNONYMS

*Prasophyllum pumilum* Hook.f.; *Genoplesium pumilum* (Hook.f.) D.L.Jones & M.A.Clem.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

February–October

## FRUITING

March–December

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Minute seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult—should not be removed from the wild.

## ETYMOLOGY

**pumila**: Small

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

## NVS CODE

CORPML

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: EF, Sp

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: EF, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: EF

2004 | Sparse

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally At Risk – Regionally Declining | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, PF, RR, SO Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland”](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

## 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.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/corunastylis-pumila/>

## PDF DATE

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