

Cyrtostylis oblonga

COMMON NAME

winter orchid

SYNONYMS

Acianthus oblongus (J.D.Hook.) Schltr., *Acianthus reniformis* var. *oblongus* (Hook.f.) Rupp et Hatch;

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Cyrtostylis oblonga Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

Yes

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

NVS CODE

CYROBL

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44(+2)

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

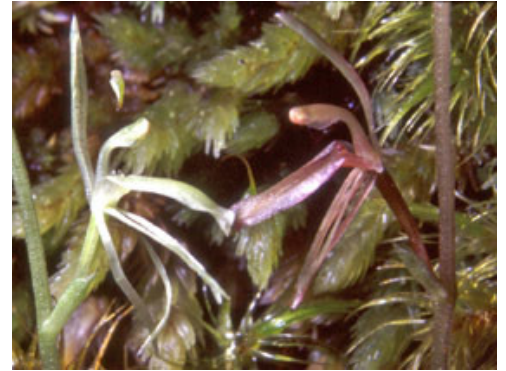
Endemic. Three Kings Islands and the northern North Island

HABITAT

Coastal to lower montane in open clay pans or lightly shaded scrub. May be found amongst mosses on basalt rock. Most commonly found in shallow leaf litter or hard clay

FEATURES

Winter to spring flowering perennial herb. Plants at flower up to 100 mm tall (usually less), elongating in seed, Stem erect, slender. Leaf sessile, almost basal, 10-40 x 8-17 mm, yellow-green to green, oblong, obtuse to subacute, base cordate to rounded. Inflorescence a raceme up to 30 mm long; floral bracts diminutive, membranous. Flowers 1-4; perianth 8-10 mm long, spreading, pink or pinkish-green. Sepals subequal; dorsal sepal narrow linear-lanceolate, obtuse, erect, concave; lateral sepal narrow-linear, acute, projecting forwards or widely spreading. Petals similar to lateral sepals. Labellum 10 x 4 mm, oblong; apex obtuse, not recurved, projecting horizontally forwards, the adjacent margins toothed; surface more or less plane, lamina bearing two prominent, spheroidal basal calli and two, flat, longitudinal ridges that extend nearly to the apex. Column shorter than the labellum, conspicuous; wings narrow below, widening above so that the stigma is flanked by two lobes. Pollinia two per anther cell, more or less ellipsoid to tabular, some what crescent-shaped, crumbling readily in single grains.



Hunua Range, Wharekawa side. August 2000.
Photographer: Eric Scanlen



Leaf and flower bud. Warkworth. Photographer:
Jeremy Rolfe

SIMILAR TAXA

Most likely to be confused when vegetative with species of spider orchid (*Corybas* (those recently treated as *Nematoceras*) from which it is not easily distinguished unless bearing flower buds, which are multiple in a raceme, rather than mostly solitary, rarely in pairs. From *Cyrtostylis rotundifolia* it differs by its yellow-green to green, oblong rather than greyish-green, oblong leaf. Other distinctions are less clear and the status of these two species requires further investigation. *Cyrtostylis oblonga* could be confused with *Acianthus sinclairii* from which it differs by favouring more open habitats and having sessile leaves held close to or at the base of the stem and lying on or very close to the ground, and the labellum is larger, oblong, rather than ovate, and the petals are as long as, or longer than the lateral sepals, rather than much shorter. The very uncommon *Townsonia deflexa* is somewhat similar to both *Cyrtostylis* species but occupies very different forest habitats and it forms interconnected creeping patches. *Townsonia deflexa* has a much smaller, petiolate leaf distinct from the flowering stem which supports a small, orbicular rather than ovate cauline leaf, otherwise *T. deflexa* has flowers that are very similar to those of *Cyrtostylis* and indeed *Acianthus*.

FLOWERING

July - November

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Red/Pink

FRUITING

August - March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - should not be removed from the wild

ETYMOLOGY

cyrtostylis: Curved style

oblonga: Oblong

TAXONOMIC NOTES

Long regarded as either *Acianthus reniformis* or *Cyrtostylis reniformis*. Based on a mostly unpublished molecular (nrITS based study) and limited chromosomal evidence *Cyrtostylis reniformis* is now regarded as an Australian endemic (B.P.J. Molloy *pers. comm.*). New Zealand plants treated under that name have been referred to *Cyrtostylis oblonga* Hook.f. and *C. rotundifolia* (B.P.J. Molloy *pers. comm.*), however, Paul Kores (*pers. comm.*) on the basis of critical multi-marker DNA and morphological based studies of *Acianthus* and it allies treats *Cyrtostylis* as a synonym of *Acianthus*. That work did not examine the taxonomic status of New Zealand plants. More recently, an as yet unpublished (now in press) study of the Australian and New Zealand Orchidaceae has shown that *Cyrtostylis* is not allied to *Acianthus* but rather is sister to *Corybas* (which as circumscribed there now includes the segregate genera *Anzybas*, *Nematoceras*, *Singularybas* - but not *Molloybas*) (P. Weston *pers. comm.* November 2014).

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

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

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/cyrtostylis-oblonga/>