

# Dianella haemata

## COMMON NAME

Swamp blueberry, swamp ink berry, swamp Dianella

## SYNONYMS

None (first described 2007)

## FAMILY

Xanthorrhoeaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Dianella haemata* Heenan et de Lange

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## NVS CODE

DIAHAE

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 16

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DP

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP

2004 | Sparse

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North Island. Te Pahi south to at least the Mamaku Plateau and near Te Awamutu.

## HABITAT

A coastal to lowland wetland species favouring high moor restiad dominated peat bogs. However, it is also known from low moor systems and transitional bogs, the margins of swamps developed within geothermal areas and even from the floating sud communities developed around peat lakes.



Hauraki swamp, Dec. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth



Hauraki swamp. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth

## FEATURES

Upright, densely tussock-forming evergreen perennial herb; forming very tight, compact and upright clumps; rhizomes up to 20 mm long. Leaves 1-2 m long, 18-25 mm wide, uniformly olive-green to dull dark green, discolourous, usually upright, slightly curved, sometimes drooping, more or less flat, lamina smooth and more or less glossy; margin and abaxial midrib with obscure to prominent minute teeth; apex subacute to more or less obtuse, cucullate; leaf sheaths equitant, tightly clasping, surface and margin weakly to strongly flushed blood-red, red-maroon or pink, especially near base; apex subacute to more or less obtuse, cucullate. Inflorescence erect, 1-2 m long, usually among the leaves; scape slender, arching base asymmetric up to 8.5 x 5.3 mm diameter; panicle 400-700 mm long, branches spreading, short, regularly spaced; cauline leaves subtending branches, leaf-like at the base but reducing in size and becoming bract-like distally; cymules 3-5-flowered; pedicels 9-20 mm long, slightly recurved, terete; bracteoles 1.0-1.2 x c.0.2 mm, narrow-triangular, subtending pedicels, caducous. Flowers nodding, 10-11 mm diameter, opening mid-morning, collapsing late afternoon, perianth segments patent to slightly recurved; sepals 4.8-5.5 x 1.9-2.0 mm, oblong, undersides olive-green flushed red-brown, upper surface paler, apex obtuse; petals 4.1-4.2 x 2.9-3.0 mm, obovate, white, midvein olive-green, apex obtuse to retuse; filaments 6, 1.2-1.4 mm long, white; struma 0.8-1.3 x 0.6-0.7 mm, short oblong to oblong-obovate, yellow, minutely papillose; ovary 1.3-1.5 x c.1.3 mm, green, more or less globular; style 1.4-1.5 mm long, white. Berry 8-20 x 7-10 mm, ovoid to oblong, grey-white and dull to strong violet-blue and glossy, pericarp spongy. Seeds 1.8-2.5 x 2.3-3.2 mm, ovoid, black, shiny.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *D. latissima* Heenan et de Lange and *D. nigra* Colenso by the densely tussock forming habit, with very tight, compact and upright clumps, ascending rhizomes up to 20 mm long; usually blood red (sometimes pink) leaf sheaths; uniformly olive-green to dull dark green, upright leaves up to 2 m long and 25 mm wide, with prominent, harsh but usual sparse teeth on the leaf margins, subacute to hooded leaf apex; inflorescences hidden among the leaves, shortly oblong to oblong-obovate (0.8-1.3 mm long) struma; and by the styles which are 1.4-1.5 mm long cf 2.0-2.2 mm long in *D. latissima* and 1.7-2.1 mm long in *D. nigra*. *Dianella haemata* is further distinguished by its preference for acidic wetland habitats.

## FLOWERING

September - November

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

## FRUITING

November - April

## LIFE CYCLE

Fleshy berries are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from the division of whole plants and from fresh seed. Despite its natural restriction to wetlands it is easily grown in most situations.

## THREATS

Seriously at risk from wetland drainage - especially in the greater Waikato (which appears to be its main centre of distribution). Also vulnerable to competition from wetland weeds such as Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis* L.) and grey willow (*Salix cinerea* L.). Over large parts of its Waikato range it now survives on the margins of drained peat bogs lining roadside ditches where it is vulnerable to weed spraying. These losses are tempered by the high probability that as a new species its exact range has yet to be determined. Previously regarded (as *Dianella* aff. *nigra* (b) (AK 252911; Kopouatai)) as *Sparse* in de Lange et al. (2004).

## ETYMOLOGY

**dianella**: Little Diana

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

## CULTURAL USE/IMPORTANCE

For further information refer to:

### ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (18 December 2007). Description adapted from Heenan & de Lange (2007).

### REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

de Lange et al., 2004, Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 45-76.

Heenan, P.B.; de Lange, P.J. 2007: Two new species of *Dianella* (Hemerocallidaceae) from New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 45: 269-285

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285-309

### CITATION

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

### MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dianella-haemata/>