

Dianella latissima

COMMON NAMES

ink berry, blueberry

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tussock forming, evergreen perennial herb, forming dense to open, larger and robust clumps; rhizomes horizontal, up to 100 mm long. Leaves 0.5-1.2 m long, 15-35 mm wide, uniformly green to light green, discolourous, strongly curved and drooping, more or less flat, lamina smooth and more or less glossy; margin and midrib on leaf undersides bearing prominent and coarsely scabrid teeth; apex acute; leaf sheaths equitant, tightly clasping, surface and margin pale green to light yellow-green; apex acute to subacute. Inflorescence erect to spreading, 1.0-1.5 m long, exerted above the leaves; scape slender, arching, base asymmetric and up to 100 x 75 mm diameter; panicle 500-800 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 3-7-flowered; pedicels 10-17 mm long, slightly recurved, terete; bracteoles 1.0-1.2 x c.0.2 mm, narrow-triangular, subtending pedicels caducous. Flowers nodding, 9-11 mm diameter, opening early morning, collapsing late afternoon, perianth segments strongly recurved; sepals 4.4-4.5 x 1.6-1.7 mm long, white; anthers 1.3-1.4 x c.0.4 mm, yellow-brown; struma 1.3-1.4 x c.0.6 mm, oblong, yellow, minutely papillose; ovary 1.4-1.6 x 1.1-1.3 mm, green, more or less globular; style 2.0-2.2 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 1.8-2.1 x 2.3-3.0 mm, ovoid, black, shiny.

SIMILAR TAXA

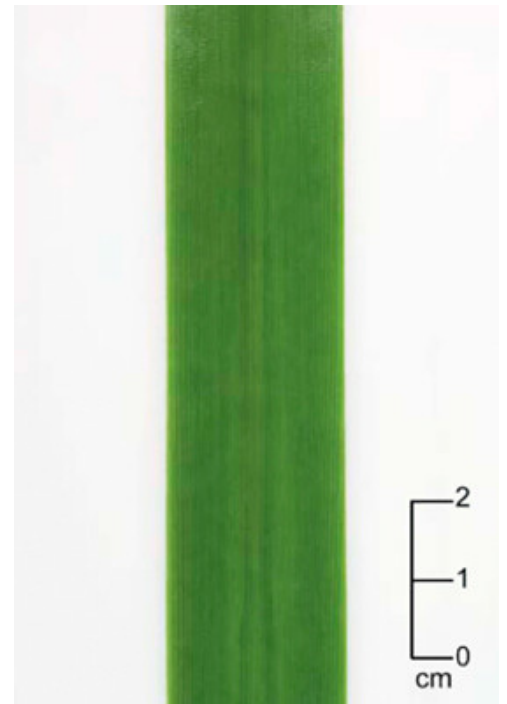
Distinguished from *D. haemata* Heenan et de Lange and *D. nigra* Colenso by the tussock forming habit, with dense to loose large, robust, clumps, horizontally spreading rhizomes up to 100 mm long; pale green to yellow-green leaf sheaths; uniformly green to light green, curved, drooping leaves up to 1.2 m long and 35 mm wide with prominent, teeth on the leaf margins and midrib of the leaf underside, acute leaf apex; inflorescences exposed from leaves, oblong (1.3-1.4 mm long) struma; and by the styles which are 2.0-2.2 mm long cf 1.4-1.5 mm long in *D. latissima* and 1.7-2.1 mm long in *D. nigra*. *Dianella latissima* does not grow in wetlands.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic.



Rhizomes and leaf bases. Waima Forest. Photographer: Peter B. Heenan, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Section of leaf. Waima Forest. Photographer: Peter B. Heenan, Licence: CC BY-NC.

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (1-770 m a.s.l.). Exact habitat preferences are still unclear but *D. latissima* has been collected from coastal shrubland and forest, lowland forest, especially kauri (*Agathis australis* (D.Don) Lindl.) dominated forest and from cloud forest.

THREATS

Probably not threatened but its exact distribution and national abundance needs clarification. Indications are that *D. latissima* is not so much threatened as it is not yet known to botanists. It seems to be very common in some parts of Northland and Great and Little Barrier Islands. It is very wide ranging and it popular occurs throughout the North Island. Previously regarded (as *Dianella* aff. *nigra* (a) (AK 256873; Hauturu)) as Data Deficient in de Lange et al., 2004, Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand, *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 45-76.

GENUS

Dianella

FAMILY

Xanthorrhoeaceae

AUTHORITY

Dianella latissima Heenan et de Lange

SYNONYMS

None (first described 2007)

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September - November

FRUITING

November - May

LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from the division of whole plants and from fresh seed. A very attractive species that has huge horticultural potential on account of its larger growth habit, and wider, light green leaves.

ETYMOLOGY

dianella: Little Diana

latissima: Very wide

NVS CODE

DIALAT

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 16

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Data Deficient

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT 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

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

ATTRIBUTION

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

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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

PDF DATE

27 May 2026