

Drosera gunniana

COMMON NAMES

sundew

BIOSTATUS

Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Non-resident Native – Coloniser | Qualifiers: EF, SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledons other than Composites

FLOWER COLOURS

White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tuberous herb, yellow-green to yellow in colour (rarely reddish); tuber ovoid, up to 5 × 5 mm tall; surface pink to red, often in a papery sheath; vertical stolon 10–40 mm long. Above ground parts of the plants glabrous stems up to 380 mm tall; unbranched or branched apically, distally, or both. Leaves, often in a flat basal rosette and cauline; basal leaves 2–22, the lamina ovate, elliptic, flabellate, reniform to hatchet-shaped, 1–5 × 2–11mm on a linear petiole 3.0–17.0 × 1.8 mm; cauline leaves alternate, the lamina crescentic, 1.0–6.5 × 1–10 mm, with acute angles, on petiole 3–17 mm long. Inflorescence a 1-sided raceme, 1–10-flowered; peduncle usually 10–50 mm long, but can be as short as 0.1 mm; pedicels 0.5–15 mm long. Sepals ovate, elliptic or obovate, 2.0–5.0 × 0.7–2.4 mm, usually moderately to densely hairy (with up to 30 hairs per mm square), but can also be glabrous; always with a fimbriate margin with hairs up to 1.3mm long. Petals obovate, 5–8 mm long by 3–8 mm wide, pink or white (drying pink). Styles 3, 0.3–1.2 mm long, divided into a total of between c.20-30 segments. Seeds 0.5 × 0.25 mm, black, ovoid to almost cylindrical with a short neck, surface deeply reticulated

SIMILAR TAXA

In New Zealand, *D. gunniana* could be confused only with *D. auriculata*, with which it often grows and from which it differs by the hairy rather than glabrous sepals and cylindrical, reticulate seeds (these 0.5 mm long rather than > 1 mm long).

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. North Island from Te Pahi south to the northern Waikato. Also Australia (south-eastern Australia and eastern Tasmania).

HABITAT

Coastal to lowland on consolidated sand dunes, on clay pans, sometimes on peat. Usually in low gum land scrub and adjacent shrub lands. Often common after fires, and favours frequently disturbed ground.



Drosera peltata showing coarse, golden hairs on fruit. Photographer: A. J. Townsend, Date taken: 21/10/2009, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Lake Kai Iwi, Northland. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 23/10/2009, Licence: CC BY.

THREATS

Drosera gunniana was first recorded for New Zealand as *D. peltata* (Salmon 2001) when it was recognised from various swamps and gum land scrub Northland. Although it is not clear when this species first arrived in New Zealand, it has been widely collected since it was first drawn to the attention of botanists, and it is now well established throughout Northland and has expanded its range to as far south as the northern Waikato. *Drosera gunniana* (as *D. hookeri*) has been listed for New Zealand as a “Coloniser” since 2009 (de Lange et al., 2009) a status which still remains appropriate (see de Lange et al. 2018).

GENUS

Drosera

FAMILY

Droseraceae

AUTHORITY

Drosera gunniana (Planch.) de Salas

SYNONYMS

Drosera foliosa Hook.f. ex Planch. nom. illegit.; *Drosera peltata* var. *foliosa* (Planch.) Benth., *Drosera peltata* var. *genuina* Planch., *Drosera peltata* var. *gracilis* (Planch.) Benth.; *Drosera peltata* var. *gunniana* Planch.; *Drosera peltata* Thunb. auct. Salmon (2011), *Drosera hookeri* R.P.Gibson, B.J.Conn et Conran auct. New Zealand authors

TAXONOMIC NOTES

New Zealand plants of *Drosera gunniana* have previously been treated as *Drosera peltata* (Salmon 2001), and then, by Gibson et al. (2010), as a new species, *D. hookeri*. Recently de Salas (2018) elevated *Drosera peltata* var. *gunniana* Planch. to species rank and in process redefined *D. hookeri*. Since then de Salas (pers. comm.) has examined images of New Zealand plants referred to *Drosera hookeri* and commented that they are *D. gunniana*. His view is followed here.

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September - November

FRUITING

November - February

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Can be grown in pots from seed or from the small overwintering bulbils. Quite easily grown in this way. In suitable conditions it can naturalise itself.

ETYMOLOGY

drosera: Dewy

NVS CODE

DROGUN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 32

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Non-resident Native – Coloniser | Qualifiers: EF, SO
2012 | Non-resident Native – Coloniser | Qualifiers: EF, SO
2009 | Non-resident Native – Coloniser | Qualifiers: SO, DP, EF
2004 | Not Threatened
[Jump to current conservation status](#)

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regional Non-Resident – Regional Coloniser | Qualifiers: DPS, DPT, 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

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Salmon, B. 2001: *Carnivorous Plants of New Zealand*. Ecosphere Publications: Auckland.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (7 June 2019). Description adapted from de Salas (2018).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/drosera-gunniana/>

PDF DATE

25 May 2026