

Drymoanthus flavus

COMMON NAME

spotted fleshy tree orchid

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Drymoanthus flavus St George et Molloy

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

NVS CODE

DRYFLA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 38

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2018 | At Risk – Declining

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Serious Decline

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic to New Zealand. Known from scattered sites in the North Island, from Waitomo, Whirinaki Forest and Te Kopia Geothermal Reserve (Paeroa Range) to Wellington and Palliser Bay. In the South Island sparsely distributed, only becoming more common in southern Otago, Southland and Stewart Island.

HABITAT

A trunk and branch epiphyte of lowland to montane forest.

FEATURES

Diminutive epiphyte of trunks and branches relatively clean of other epiphytic plants. Occasionally found on rock outcrops and cliff faces. Forming branched, leafy, tufts (20-)30-60(-80) mm diameter, with many white to brown, cord-like roots firmly attached to substrate. Leaves (10-)30-50(-70) x (5-)15(-20) mm, green or yellowish green, frequently purple spotted, leathery, elliptic to lanceolate, with acute often twisted tips. Inflorescences racemose, one or more per stem, up to 50 mm long, bearing (1-)2-6(-10) flowers. Flowers at first yellowish-green flecked with purple, maturing yellow. Sepals and petals subequal, spreading widely but projecting forwards and inwards to form a cup. Dorsal sepal 3.5-4 x 1.5 mm, lateral sepals shorter, petals 2.5-3 x 1.5 mm. Labellum 2 x 1.8 mm, projected forwards, immobile, concave, channelled, apex thickened, fleshy, clear yellow, lacking distal lamina calli. Capsule 15 x 5 mm, fusiform, yellowish green and purple spotted.



Whirinaki. Photographer: Eric Scanlen



Foliage and fruit. Eastbourne. May 2007.
Photographer: Robyn Smith

SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *D. adversus* from which it differs by its smaller size; thinner more leathery, elliptic to lanceolate, acute, dull pale green, mostly spotted leaves; yellow flowers; trough-shaped labellum without distal lamina calli; frequently spotted capsules; and by its diploid chromosome number.

FLOWERING

October to November

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

FRUITING

December to July

LIFE CYCLE

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

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult. Should not be removed from the wild. Plants can be grown by strapping them to a log, or wood slab and placing them suspended in a sheltered, warm position. Water frequently until well established.

THREATS

Threatened by indiscriminate plant collectors. With some well known locations stripped bare in recent years.

ETYMOLOGY

flavus: Pale yellow

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available but plants are held by specialist growers.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 August 2003. Description based on Molloy & St George (1994).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Molloy, B.P.J.; St.George, I. M. 1994: A new species of *Drymoanthus* (Orchidaceae) from New Zealand, and typification of *D. adversus*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 32: 415-421.

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

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/drymoanthus-flavus/>