

# 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

2017 | At Risk – Declining | Qualifiers: DP, Sp

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

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

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Serious Decline

## DISTRIBUTION

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

## HABITAT

A trunk and branch epiphyte of lowland to montane forest.



Whirinaki. Photographer: Eric Scanlen, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Foliage and fruit. Eastbourne. May 2007. Photographer: Robyn Smith, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

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) × (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. **Lateral sepals and petals** subequal, spreading widely but projecting forwards and inwards to form a cup; lateral sepals shorter, petals 2.5–3 × 1.5 mm. **Dorsal sepal** 3.5–4 × 1.5 mm. **Labellum** 2 × 1.8 mm, projected forwards, immobile, concave, channelled, apex thickened, fleshy, clear yellow, lacking distal lamina calli. **Capsule** 15 × 5 mm, fusiform, yellowish green and purple spotted.

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to native orchids of New Zealand

## SIMILAR TAXA

Allied to *Drymoanthus 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–November

## FLOWER COLOURS

Green, Yellow

## FRUITING

December–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 BPJ, St. George IM. 1994. A new species of *Drymoanthus* (Orchidaceae) from New Zealand, and typification of *D. adversus*. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 32(4): 415–421. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0028825X.1994.10412928>.  
Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

## NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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

## MORE INFORMATION

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