

# Gastrodia minor

## COMMON NAME

gastrodia

## SYNONYMS

None

## FAMILY

Orchidaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Gastrodia minor* Petrie

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 40

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North, South and Stewart Islands

## HABITAT

Lowland to montane (up to 1200 m a.s.l.). Usually in shrubland, often dominated by kahikatoa (*Leptospermum scoparium* J.R.Forst. et G.Forst.) or members of the manuka (*Kunzea ericoides* (A.Rich.) Joy Thomps.) complex. Also commonly seen within pine plantations and growing amongst Spanish heather (*Erica lusitanica* Ruldophi).



Flower open from Iwitihi, 9/1/1997.  
Photographer: Eric Scanlen



Eastern Wairarapa. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

## FEATURES

Terrestrial, saprophytic, deciduous, fleshy, perennial herb lacking chlorophyll. Rhizome mycorrhizal, tuberous, rather swollen, short-lived, extensively branched, individual sections up to 40 x 10 mm, dull pale brown to brownish-black, sparsely clad in chartaceous scales, especially toward the active apex. Plant at flowering up to 300 mm tall. Stem 1.5-2 mm diameter, dark brown to brown-black, slender, rather brittle when fresh. Scale leaves chartaceous, few, small and widely spaced. Flowers up to 10, brownish-black, usually cleistogamous, unscented, erect to spreading, tubular, sparsely tuberculate toward base, tubercules paler in colour. Perianth 6-10 x 2-4 mm, lobes slightly thickened toward margins. Lateral sepals fused slightly above the gibbous base otherwise with their margins lying close together. Labellum 2.5-4 x 1.0-2.0 mm, white, narrow-oblong, membranous, not irritable, completely enclosed within floral tube (apex just visible in the open flowers) and mostly fused to it, thickened distally, margins narrow, slightly undulose, bearing two long median, cristate, pinkish white calli, apex yellow. Column very short, wing a minute, erect, process; anther terminal, erect and bending forwards, short, ellipsoid, operculate, filament scarcely pleated at the back, pollen breaking into angular granules; stigma basal, immediately below anther, ellipsoid, hollow; rostellum flap-like, positioned under anther.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Easily distinguished from the other New Zealand *Gastrodia* species by its much smaller size (upto 300 mm long), and fewer flowered (< 10), much narrower, smaller, mostly blackish-brown, tubular flowers that scarcely open (if at all). The perianth lobes are internally white, and the labellum distinctly yellow-tipped.

## FLOWERING

November - March

## FLOWER COLOURS

Black, Brown

## FRUITING

January - April

## LIFE CYCLE

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

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

A saprophytic species which should not be removed from the wild. Difficult to grow.

## ETYMOLOGY

**gastrodia**: Belly tooth (flower centre)

**minor**: Smaller

## WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

## ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970)

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

[NZPCN Gastrodia Key](#) prepared by Jeremy Rolfe (pdf, 5Mb)

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

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

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/gastrodia-minor/>