

# Libertia grandiflora

## COMMON NAMES

mikoikoi, NZ iris

## BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Plants consisting of leafy fans, closely bunched on short, highly branched rhizomes, joined by short stolons. Leaves 100–1400 × 2–12 mm, the two surfaces similar; leaf bases pink-green; nerves many, median ones may be crowded to sometimes form a midrib; margins often finely scabrid; leaf in transverse section convex lens-shaped, with two rows of vascular bundles present centrally, marginal vascular bundle present, sclerenchyma present on inside of leaf sheath. Inflorescences long, usually carrying flowers above leaves; peduncles also long. Panicle broad, much and openly branched, lower bracts long (40–130 mm), green and lanceolate, upper bracts narrow and pale brown, occurring singly; 1–6 flowers per branch. Pedicels slender but stiff, 10–50 mm long, glabrous. Perianth bud often pigmented externally, equal to or twice as long as ovary, flowers 10–30 mm diameter; tepals all white internally, widely patent; outer tepals < ½ of inner, narrower, oblong-elliptical, boat-shaped, with apiculus; inner tepals, unguiculate, distal portion orbicular and often overlapping outer tepals, cleft present at tips. Staminal filaments shortly connate; anthers c. 3 mm long, bright yellow. Ovary pyriform, small compared with perianth bud; style branches scarcely winged, pointing upwards. Capsule 6–14 mm × 4–8 mm, tear-drop shaped, green, turning to black on maturity, fully dehiscent by shorter or longer loculicidal splitting, the longer valves often widely recurved. Seeds c. 1.0–2.0 × 1.0–1.5 mm, rounded or sometimes angular if crowded, bright tangerine orange.

## SIMILAR TAXA

The large orbicular petals, small boat-shaped sepals, and inflorescences which usually overtop the leaf tips separates *L. grandiflora* from all other New Zealand taxa. *L. grandiflora* differs from *L. mooreae* by leaf length, the lack of red-purple leaf bases, fully dehiscent capsules, bright orange seeds, and in cross-section by the lens-shaped leaves which have marginal vascular bundles. It differs from *L. peregrinans*, *L. cranwelliae*, and *L. edgariae* by the lack of elongated rhizomes, from *L. ixioides* by the petal and sepal shape, and the taller inflorescences, and from *L. micrantha* by the taller stature and much larger flowers.

## DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Te Pahi to Wellington but seemingly absent from the Volcanic plateau)



Flower detail, Te Marua. Photographer: Colin C. Ogle, Date taken: 11/11/1972, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Remutaka Rail Trail. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 02/12/2006, Licence: CC BY.

## HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Usually in open, lowland forest remnants, forest margins, on steep slopes, ridgelines, bluffs, cliffs, stream banks, and river terraces.

## GENUS

Libertia

## FAMILY

Iridaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Libertia grandiflora* (R.Br.) Sweet

## SYNONYMS

*Renalmia grandiflora* R.Br.; *Libertia orbicularis* Col.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

September – November

## FRUITING

December – April

## LIFE CYCLE AND DISPERSAL

Seeds are possibly dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by the division of established plants, and tolerant of a wide range of situations - except permanently water logged soils. *Libertia grandiflora* is an attractive plant that deserves to be more widely cultivated that it is.

## ETYMOLOGY

**libertia**: Named after Marie-Anne Libert, (1782-1865) born & died in Malmedy, province of Liège, Belgium; botanist and mycologist

**grandiflora**: Large flowered

## NVS CODE

LIBGRA

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 114

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | Not Threatened

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

[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

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 by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/libertia-grandiflora/>

## PDF DATE

25 May 2026