

Pterostylis banksii

COMMON NAMES

tutukiwi, greenhood

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Terrestrial, tuberous, glabrous, spring to summer-green perennial herb, forming dense colonies of numerous plants through vegetative extension. Plant at flowering 100–680 mm tall. **Stem** stiffly erect, smooth, dark green to reddish green, internodes shorter than leaves throughout. **Leaves** 4–6, sessile, stiffly erect to curved and more or less drooping, dark green to yellow green with entire margins; in sterile plants lamina of similar size, oblong-elliptic to broadly lanceolate; in flowering plants lamina changing in size from base to top of stem; lamina of largest leaves 50–250 × 10–20 mm, lanceolate to linear-lanceolate, keeled, often with 2 laterals on either side of midrib, apex acuminate to long acuminate, base wider than rest of lamina broadening into a long sheathing base; mostly overtopping flower. **Flower** 1–(2), erect, front mostly green finely striped with white, stripes of white widening toward back of galea with green narrowing, back of galea sometimes completely white. **Ovary** erect. **Dorsal sepal** distinctly broadly ovoid to subglobose, 25–50 mm tall, erect, distal portion usually more or less horizontal in fully open flowers, apex tapering to a long caudate, upturned tip up to 25 mm long and usually exceeding the lateral sepals. **Lateral sepals** diverging at a narrow angle, caudae of lobes up to 20 mm long, tapered, erect or strongly deflexed backwards, not or scarcely decurved. **Petals** much shorter than dorsal sepal with acuminate apices. **Labellum** elliptic-oblong, scarcely arched, flat in cross-section, narrowing slightly towards tip, bending forwarding smoothly and symmetrical, protruding from lateral sepals sinus, midrib initially prominent soon evanescent toward the obtuse, often cucullate apex. **Column** as tall as or slightly taller than labellum; stigma ellipsoid, scarcely distinguished from column and rather flat.



Progress Valley, Catlins (flower detail).
Photographer: Jesse Bythell, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Lateral view of labellum and column. Stokes Valley, Lower Hutt. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 09/11/2013, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA

Most likely to be confused with to *P. patens* Colenso, from which it differs by the spreading rather than stiffly erect, lanceolate to linear-lanceolate rather than broadly lanceolate to linear-lanceolate (grassy) leaves which usually overtop the flower; by the dorsal sepal which projects forwards and upwards in a long (up to 23 mm) tapered caudae, rather than being strongly deflexed downwards; and by lateral sepals whose caudae are erect or deflexed backwards but never strongly deflexed back and down, sometimes meeting at the back of the ovary. Both species are frequently sympatric in the central North Island. The distinction between *P. banksii* and *P. australis* Hook.f. can at times be difficult. *Pterostylis australis* differs from *P. banksii* by the shorter, broader leaves, which mostly just reach rather than overtop the flower, by its much shorter dorsal sepal and consistently arched labellum. *Pterostylis banksii* has a superficial similarity to *Pterostylis irwinii* D.L.Jones, Molloy et M.A.Clem., which differs by its very slender, erect, dark green to reddish green leaves, incurved lateral sepals which cause the sepals to prominently lean forward of the rest of the flower thereby forming an inward turning jug spout at the sinus, and by the green, broadly lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate labellum, which has a distinct black central ridge terminating in a reddish cupular apex.

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island, South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (up to 800 m a.s.l.). In indigenous or exotic forests and shrubland.

GENUS

Pterostylis

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Pterostylis banksii A.Cunn.

SYNONYMS

Pterostylis emarginata Colenso, *Pterostylis macrophylla* A.Cunn. ex Hook.f. nom. illegit.

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

September–November

FRUITING

November–February

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficul. For cultivation requirements see other *Pterostylis*.

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ETYMOLOGY

pterostylis: Winged column

banksii: Named after Sir Joseph Banks, 1st Baronet, GCB, PRS (24 February 1743 - 19 June 1820) was an English naturalist, botanist and patron of the natural sciences.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to native orchids of New Zealand](#)

NVS CODE

PTEBAN

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

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.

Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help

The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "[Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025](#)" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Moore LB, Edgar E. 1970. Flora of New Zealand, Volume II. Indigenous Tracheophyta: Monocotyledones except Gramineae. Government Printer, Wellington, NZ. 354 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007: Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970). Some of this factsheet information is derived from [Flora of New Zealand Online](#) and is used under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand](#) licence.

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pterostylis-banksii/>

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