

Pterostylis graminea

COMMON NAME

Grass-leaved Greenhood

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Pterostylis graminea Hook.f.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

NVS CODE

PTEGRA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 44$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2012 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. North, South and Stewart Islands

HABITAT

Coastal to montane (up to 1000 m a.s.l.) mainly in indigenous forest, also in gumland scrub, peat bogs and within the more fertile lag zone of wetland margins. A variable species which in the current broad sense adopted by the New Zealand Flora series has no clear habitat preferences.



Stokes Valley. Nov 2003. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe



South Makara. Nov 1993. Photographer: Jeremy Rolfe

FEATURES

Terrestrial, tuberous, glabrous, spring to summer-green perennial herb, mostly solitary or forming small patches of 3-5 plants through vegetative extension. Plant at flowering 10-330 mm tall. Stem erect, smooth, dark green, to reddish green, internodes < leaves. Leaves strictly erect, up to 4-6(-8), with entire margins, size changing from base to top of stem; the largest leaf on stem 80-150 x 5-10 mm, usually smaller, green to yellow-green, all linear-lanceolate, keeled with long-acuminate apices, widest near the sessile sheathing base, overtopping the flower. Flower solitary, usually tipping slightly forwards, small and delicate, front closely striped dark green and white, back of galea sparingly striped with green, mostly completely white. Ovary erect. Dorsal sepal 18-30 mm tall, erect then sharply horizontal, bearing few, widely spaced bands of green, the spacing of these widening toward rear to leave broad white bands or a completely white back; apex distinctly down-curved, acuminate to shortly caudate; lateral sepals diverging at a narrow angle, initially erect, apex curved to the front of galea, acuminate, shortly caudate, overtopping galea. Petals broad almost to apex, a little shorter than dorsal sepal. Labellum basally red otherwise greenish-brown or green with a distinctly darker apex; lamina oblong to narrowly oblong, slightly arched and then bend forward smoothly and symmetrically between the lateral sepals, flat in cross-section, with midrib only slightly prominent, and grading from weakly to completely indiscernible toward apex, apex emarginate. Column more or less tall as the labellum; stigma narrow, scarcely distinguished from column.

SIMILAR TAXA

An extremely variable species which probably encompasses a number of distinct entities worthy of taxonomic recognition at some level. *Pterostylis graminea* is most likely to be confused with *P. agathicola* D.L.Jones, Molloy et M.A.Clem., which is endemic kauri (*Agathis australis* (D.Don.) Lindl.) dominated forests and differs by its fewer, drooping to almost horizontal, rather than erect leaves, which rarely overtop the flower; by the much longer, attenuated dorsal sepal that arches upwards; and by the usually reddish labellum which has a prominent raised midrib and a pinched in, somewhat twisted rather than more or less flat and emarginate apex. A form found in North Island lowland peat bogs is very similar to *P. cernua* D.L.Jones, Molloy et M.A.Clem.

FLOWERING

September - January

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

FRUITING

October - April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult - should not be removed from the wild. Basic orchid mix consists of 2 parts medium coarse sand, ideally clean river sand; 2 parts soil, humus or leaf-mould; 1 part weathered sawdust or rotting wood; 1 part granulated bark. For *Pterostylis* shade of 50% and pots kept evenly moist.

ETYMOLOGY

pterostylis: Winged column

graminea: Grassy

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007: Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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

CITATION

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

MORE INFORMATION

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