Pterostylis montana

COMMON NAMES
greenhood

BIOSTATUS
Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS
2023 | Not Threatened
Jump to previous conservation statuses

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Orchids

FLOWER COLOURS
Green, Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Terrestrial, tuberous, glabrous, spring to summer-green perennial herb, either solitary in forming small patches of 3–10 plants through vegetative extension. Plant at flowering 30–350 mm tall. Stem erect, smooth, dark green, bronze-green to reddish green, internodes.

SIMILAR TAXA
At least seven distinct forms are currently known as *P. montana*; these are all unified by the slightly arched, broadly oblong, stout labellum whose apex is mostly subacute, constricted and conspicuously twisted to the right (when viewed from the front). The stigma also tends to be broadly to narrowly cordate (heart-shaped) and prominent, the lateral sepals rather shortly erect with the apices often twisted or recurved, and the leaves of flowering plants mostly linear-lanceolate. Some forms seem to grade into *P. banksii* A.Cunn. or *P. australis* Hook.f. Further taxonomic study is needed.

DISTRIBUTION
Endemic. New Zealand: North Island, South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands. Exact distirbution unclear as this is a species complex

HABITAT
Lowland to subalpine (up to 1200 m a.s.l.) in a wide range of habitats from dense forest to restiad peat bogs. An extremely variable species which probably comprises several as yet unnamed entities. Until these are teased out the exact ecological preferences of *P. montana* s.s. are difficult to describe.

GENUS
Pterostylis

FAMILY
Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY
Pterostylis montana Hatch

SYNONYMS
None



Southern Tararua Range. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 13/12/2008, Licence: CC BY.



TAXONOMIC NOTES
The type is a unicate collected from Stewart Island/Rakiura. The description for that plant though adequate for its time now covers a wide range of entities and it is not clear to which of these the type now refers (there are at least two entities on Stewart Island). Here NZPCN offer a broad treatment for *P. montana* recognising that it is a species complex and that further work will undoubtedly recognise possibly as many as five species within the current circumscription of *P. montana* Hatch.

ENDEMIC TAXON
Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
September–December

FRUITING
November–March

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
montana: From the Latin mons 'mountain', meaning growing on mountains

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY
Key to native orchids of New Zealand

NVS CODE
PTEMON

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 44, (43), 44

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Not Threatened
2012 | Not Threatened
2009 | Not Threatened
2004 | Not Threatened
Jump to current conservation status

REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES
Otago: 2025 | Regionally Not Threatened Help
Current regional threat status assessments prepared according to Crisp et al. (2025) are displayed when available. The Otago conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation Status of Indigenous Vascular Plants in Otago, 2025" Jarvie S et al. (2025) report.
Northland: 2026 | Regionally Data Deficient | Qualifiers: DPR DPS DPT Help
Current regional threat status assessments prepared according to Crisp et al. (2025) are displayed when available. The Northland conservation status information is sourced from the "Conservation status of indigenous vascular plants in Northland | Taitokerau" Ford et al. 2026 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.

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pterostylis-montana/

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