

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 distribution 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](#)

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-montana/>

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