

Thelymitra hatchii

COMMON NAMES

Hatch's sun orchid

BIOSTATUS

Native – Endemic taxon

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | Not Threatened

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, Violet/Purple

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Terrestrial, tuberous, glabrous, spring to summer-green perennial herb, forming dense colonies of 4–20 plants arising through vegetative extension. Plants dark reddish-green, stiffly erect, at flower up to 600 mm tall. **Leaf** solitary, erect, very fleshy to almost fleshy-coriaceous, deeply channelled and prominently ribbed longitudinally, 100–300 × 7–15 mm, dark reddish-green to reddish brown, broadly lanceolate to linear-lanceolate, strongly v-shaped in cross section, distinctly keeled, base closely sheathing. **Inflorescence** a (3)–6–(8)-flowered raceme borne on a dark reddish-green to reddish brown stout, wiry stem. **Bracts** 1–2–(3), foliaceous, closely-sheathing, fleshy, of similar colour to stem and leaf. **Flower** 15–20 mm diameter, usually pale to deep mauve sometimes pink, without stripes or spots. **Sepals, petals and labellum** fairly similar; sepals acutely elliptic, petals elliptic. **Column** robust, up to 8 mm tall, erect, sometimes with a small basal triangular process, initially white soon grading to dark mauve, then dark reddish brown near apex; post anther lobe tall, overtopping anther at least at sides, erect, truncate, more or less coarsely lacinate or denticulate but not thickened, inrolled or cucullate, sometimes obliquely forming a deep cleft at back, often terminating in two sharply acute points, usually dark red toward apex, margin more or less yellow; column arms terete to plano-convex in cross section; cilia copious, prominent, usually yellow to pale yellow, more rarely white or pink, arising from sides, back and top of arm, standing erect and overtopping post-anther lobe.

SIMILAR TAXA

A distinctive species easily recognised by the dark reddish green foliage and stem; fleshy to fleshy-coriaceous, erect prominently keeled and v-shaped leaf; usually 6 flowered racemes; dark mauve flowers; dark reddish brown post anther lobe with a yellow, jagged margin, and column arms bearing copious, coarse, usually yellow cilia.

DISTRIBUTION

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

HABITAT

Coastal to subalpine (up to 1300 m a.s.l.). Only coastal in southern part of range. Favouring clay banks, gravel, and open clay pans. Often in short scrub or fringing peat bogs and tarns. Preferring well lit places.



Column. Kaitoke Regional Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 22/12/2007, Licence: CC BY.



Leaf showing prominent keel on abaxial surface. Kaitoke Regional Park. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 22/12/2007, Licence: CC BY.

THREATS

Not Threatened. Abundant throughout its range.

GENUS

Thelymitra

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Thelymitra hatchii L.B.Moore

SYNONYMS

Thelymitra pachyphylla sensu Hatch

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

November–March

FRUITING

December–April

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Very easily grown in a sunny, well drained site. Often naturalises in gardens within urban areas abutting indigenous vegetation. Although easily cultivated, like all orchids it should not be removed from the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

thelymitra: Woman's hat

hatchii: After Hatch

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

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

NVS CODE

THEHAT

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 66

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.

Rolfe JR, de Lange PJ. 2010. Illustrated guide to New Zealand sun orchids, *Thelymitra* (Orchidaceae). Jeremy Rolfe, Wellington, NZ. 57 p.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/thelymitra-hatchii/>

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