Typha orientalis

COMMON NAMES
raupō, bulrush

BIOSTATUS
Native

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

CATEGORY
Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS
Herbs - Monocots

FLOWER COLOURS
Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION
Stout summer green, rhizomatous, colonial, usually emergent perennial herb up to 3 m tall. Rhizome to 40 mm diameter, fleshy, covered in numerous scale leaves, usually submerged in water or mud. Leaf-sheath often > 300 mm long; 1-3 m long, 10-30 mm diameter, dull green to grey-green, lamina linear-lanceolate to lanceolate, more or less plano-convex at base, pith spongy. Peduncle usually < leaves, up to 15 mm diameter. Inflorescence 300-500 mm long, the female part up to 25 mm diameter, the male portion narrower, and either continuous with or more or less separated from the female. Bracteoles in male portion more numerous than stamens, more or less equal to anthers, proximally narrow-linear, broader at tip and there variously laciniate, arising directly on axis and remaining more or less curled up after flowers fall. Male flower sessile to subsessile filaments at first shorter than anther-width, elongating later; anthers 1-3, tipped with blunt extension of connective; pollen clear yellow, grains single. Bracteoles in female part very few, absent from many flowers, more or less equal to gynophore hairs, filiform except for a few-celled expansion at apex. Female flowers much smaller than male, several grouped on proximal part of a short compound pedicel. Ovary at flower almost sessile, narrow-elliptic; style long, slender; stigma broader, spathulate, more or less concave; gynophore hairs extremely numerous, barely reaching base of stigma, stiff, filiform, very narrowly clavate at apex. Gynophore elongating at fruit 1-2 times style-length, hairs becoming confined to proximal third of gynophore and in groups or more or less whorled; persistent stigmas brown. Carpodia oblong-obovate, apices just projecting between the hairs. Seed 1.2 mm long, cuneate at base, truncate at apex, yellow.

Cape Turakirae. Photographer: John Sawyer, Licence: CC BY-NC.

Dunedin Botanic Gardens. Photographer: John Barkla, Date taken: 01/03/2013, Licence: CC BY.

SIMILAR TAXA
Typha latifolia L. has been found in cultivation in New Zealand it differs from T. orientalis by its somewhat wider, flat, pale greyish-green leaves, very dark brown to black erect flower spikes, and one-seeded fruits up to 10 mm long, each with hairs rising near the base, and chromosome number (2n = 30 cf. 2n = 60). Typha domingensis Pers. has also been reported from New Zealand. It differs from T. orientalis by its narrower leaves and much narrower inflorescences and by its chromosome number (2n = 30 cf. 2n = 60).

DISTRIBUTION
Indigenous. Kermadec Islands group (Raoul Island only), North and South Islands. Deliberately naturalised on the Chatham Islands by Maori. Present also in Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia and the wider western Pacific

HABITAT
Coastal to lowland in fertile wetlands, on the margins of ponds, lakes, slow flowing streams, and rivers. Less frequently found on the margins of low moor bogs. Occasionally found in muddy ground within industrial areas.

GENUS
Typha

FAMILY
Typhaceae

AUTHORITY
Typha orientalis C.Presl

SYNONYMS
Typha muelleri Rohrb.

ENDEMIC TAXON
No

ENDEMIC GENUS
No

ENDEMIC FAMILY
No

FLOWERING
December - February

FRUITING
March - June

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE
Easily grown from fresh seed and division of established plants. Excellent in large ponds and dams but regarded by some as an aggressive weed.

WETLAND PLANT INDICATOR STATUS RATING
OBL: Obligate Wetland
Almost always is a hydrophyte, rarely in uplands (non-wetlands).

ETYMOLOGY
typha: From the Greek name for this plant
orientalis: From the Latin orientale, meaning ‘eastern’ but sometimes also translated as ‘from the Orient’.

NVS CODE
TYPORI

CHROMOSOME NUMBER
2n = 60

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES
2017 | Not Threatened | Qualifiers: SO
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

Mason, R., Moar, N.T. 1951. Typha in N.Z. Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin, 24: 6-9
Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

ATTRIBUTION

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

MORE INFORMATION

https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/typha-orientalis/

PDF DATE

08 June 2026