

Libertia grandiflora

COMMON NAMES

mikoikoi, NZ iris

SYNONYMS

Renalmia grandiflora R.Br.; *Libertia orbicularis* Col.

FAMILY

Iridaceae

AUTHORITY

Libertia grandiflora (R.Br.) Sweet

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

NVS CODE

LIBGRA

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 114$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Te Pahi to Wellington but seemingly absent from the Volcanic plateau)

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Usually in open, lowland forest remnants, forest margins, on steep slopes, ridgelines, bluffs, cliffs, stream banks, and river terraces.



Remutaka Rail Trail. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 02/12/2006, Licence: CC BY.



Remutaka Rail Trail. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 02/12/2006, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Plants consisting of leafy fans, closely bunched on short, highly branched rhizomes, joined by short stolons. Leaves 100–1400 × 2–12 mm, the two surfaces similar; leaf bases pink-green; nerves many, median ones may be crowded to sometimes form a midrib; margins often finely scabrid; leaf in transverse section convex lens-shaped, with two rows of vascular bundles present centrally, marginal vascular bundle present, sclerenchyma present on inside of leaf sheath. Inflorescences long, usually carrying flowers above leaves; peduncles also long. Panicle broad, much and openly branched, lower bracts long (40–130 mm), green and lanceolate, upper bracts narrow and pale brown, occurring singly; 1–6 flowers per branch. Pedicels slender but stiff, 10–50 mm long, glabrous. Perianth bud often pigmented externally, equal to or twice as long as ovary, flowers 10–30 mm diameter; tepals all white internally, widely patent; outer tepals < ½ of inner, narrower, oblong-elliptical, boat-shaped, with apiculus; inner tepals, unguiculate, distal portion orbicular and often overlapping outer tepals, cleft present at tips. Staminal filaments shortly connate; anthers c. 3 mm long, bright yellow. Ovary pyriform, small compared with perianth bud; style branches scarcely winged, pointing upwards. Capsule 6–14 mm × 4–8 mm, tear-drop shaped, green, turning to black on maturity, fully dehiscent by shorter or longer loculicidal splitting, the longer valves often widely recurved. Seeds c. 1.0–2.0 × 1.0–1.5 mm, rounded or sometimes angular if crowded, bright tangerine orange.

SIMILAR TAXA

The large orbicular petals, small boat-shaped sepals, and inflorescences which usually overtop the leaf tips separates *L. grandiflora* from all other New Zealand taxa. *L. grandiflora* differs from *L. mooreae* by leaf length, the lack of red-purple leaf bases, fully dehiscent capsules, bright orange seeds, and in cross-section by the lens-shaped leaves which have marginal vascular bundles. It differs from *L. peregrinans*, *L. cranwelliae*, and *L. edgariae* by the lack of elongated rhizomes, from *L. ixioides* by the petal and sepal shape, and the taller inflorescences, and from *L. micrantha* by the taller stature and much larger flowers.

FLOWERING

September – November

FLOWER COLOURS

White, Yellow

FRUITING

December – April

LIFE CYCLE

Seeds are possibly dispersed by wind (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by the division of established plants, and tolerant of a wide range of situations - except permanently water logged soils. *Libertia grandiflora* is an attractive plant that deserves to be more widely cultivated that it is.

ETYMOLOGY

libertia: Named after Marie-Anne Libert, (1782–1865) born & died in Malmedy, province of Liège, Belgium; botanist and mycologist

grandiflora: Large flowered

ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared by P.J. de Lange for NZPCN (1 June 2013)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Thorsen, M. J.; Dickinson, K. J. M.; Seddon, P. J. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

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