

# Dianella latissima

## COMMON NAME

ink berry, blueberry

## SYNONYMS

None (first described 2007)

## FAMILY

Xanthorrhoeaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Dianella latissima* Heenan et de Lange

## FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

## ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

## NVS CODE

DIALAT

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 16$

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Data Deficient

## DISTRIBUTION

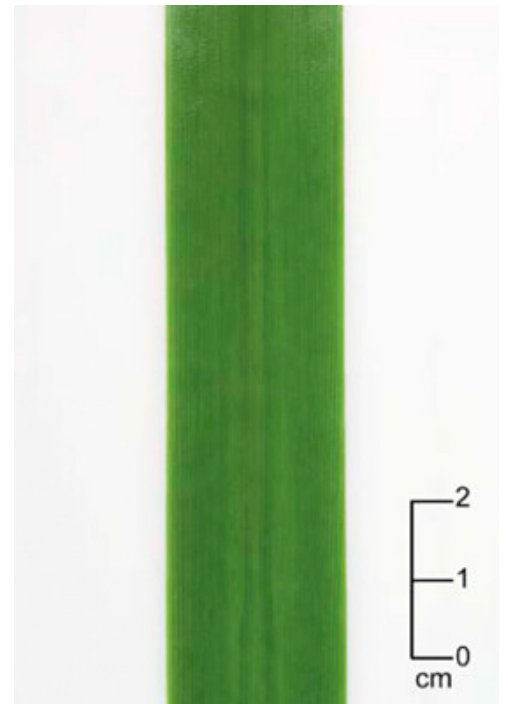
Endemic.

## HABITAT

Coastal to montane (1-770 m a.s.l.). Exact habitat preferences are still unclear but *D. latissima* has been collected from coastal shrubland and forest, lowland forest, especially kauri (*Agathis australis* (D. Don) Lindl.) dominated forest and from cloud forest.



Rhizomes and leaf bases. Waima Forest. Photographer: Peter B. Heenan, Licence: CC BY-NC.



Section of leaf. Waima Forest. Photographer: Peter B. Heenan, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Tussock forming, evergreen perennial herb, forming dense to open, larger and robust clumps; rhizomes horizontal, up to 100 mm long. Leaves 0.5-1.2 m long, 15-35 mm wide, uniformly green to light green, discolourous, strongly curved and drooping, more or less flat, lamina smooth and more or less glossy; margin and midrib on leaf undersides bearing prominent and coarsely scabrid teeth; apex acute; leaf sheaths equitant, tightly clasping, surface and margin pale green to light yellow-green; apex acute to subacute. Inflorescence erect to spreading, 1.0-1.5 m long, exerted above the leaves; scape slender, arching, base asymmetric and up to 100 x 75 mm diameter; panicle 500-800 mm long, branches spreading, short, regularly spaced; cauline leaves subtending branches, leaf-like at the base but reducing in size and becoming bract-like distally; cymules 3-7-flowered; pedicels 10-17 mm long, slightly recurved, terete; bracteoles 1.0-1.2 x c.0.2 mm, narrow-triangular, subtending pedicels caducous. Flowers nodding, 9-11 mm diameter, opening early morning, collapsing late afternoon, perianth segments strongly recurved; sepals 4.4-4.5 x 1.6-1.7 mm long, white; anthers 1.3-1.4 x c.0.4 mm, yellow-brown; struma 1.3-1.4 x c.0.6 mm, oblong, yellow, minutely papillose; ovary 1.4-1.6 x 1.1-1.3 mm, green, more or less globular; style 2.0-2.2 mm long, white. Berry 8-20 x 7-10 mm, ovoid to oblong, grey-white and dull to strong violet-blue and glossy, pericarp spongy. Seeds 1.8-2.1 x 2.3-3.0 mm, ovoid, black, shiny.

## SIMILAR TAXA

Distinguished from *D. haematica* Heenan et de Lange and *D. nigra* Colenso by the tussock forming habit, with dense to loose large, robust, clumps, horizontally spreading rhizomes up to 100 mm long; pale green to yellow-green leaf sheaths; uniformly green to light green, curved, drooping leaves up to 1.2 m long and 35 mm wide with prominent, teeth on the leaf margins and midrib of the leaf underside, acute leaf apex; inflorescences exposed from leaves, oblong (1.3-1.4 mm long) struma; and by the styles which are 2.0-2.2 mm long cf 1.4-1.5 mm long in *D. latissima* and 1.7-2.1 mm long in *D. nigra*. *Dianella latissima* does not grow in wetlands.

## FLOWERING

September - November

## FLOWER COLOURS

Brown, White

## FRUITING

November - May

## LIFE CYCLE

Fleshy berries are dispersed by frugivory (Thorsen et al., 2009).

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from the division of whole plants and from fresh seed. A very attractive species that has huge horticultural potential on account of its larger growth habit, and wider, light green leaves.

## THREATS

Probably not threatened but its exact distribution and national abundance needs clarification. Indications are that *D. latissima* is not so much threatened as it is not yet known to botanists. It seems to be very common in some parts of Northland and Great and Little Barrier Islands. It is very wide ranging and it popular occurs throughout the North Island. Previously regarded (as *Dianella* aff. *nigra* (a) (AK 256873; Hauturu)) as Data Deficient in de Lange et al., 2004, Threatened and uncommon plants of New Zealand, *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 42: 45-76.

## ETYMOLOGY

**dianella:** Little Diana

**latissima:** Very wide

## ATTRIBUTION

Fact sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange (18 December 2007). Description adapted from Heenan & de Lange (2007).

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Heenan, P.B.; de Lange, P.J. 2007: Two new species of *Dianella* (Hemerocallidaceae) from New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 45: 269-285

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

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Dianella latissima* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network. <https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dianella-latissima/> (Date website was queried)

## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/dianella-latissima/>