

Earina mucronata

COMMON NAME

bamboo orchid, peka-a-waka, spring earina

SYNONYMS

Earina quadrilobata Col.; *Earina aestivalis* Cheeseman

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Earina mucronata Lindl.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

NVS CODE

EARMUC

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

$2n = 40, 40(+0-2)$

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

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

HABITAT

Coastal to montane. Mostly epiphytic on forest tree trunks and branches, sometimes on fallen logs, and found as a also rupestral on rocks, cliff faces or banks. Occasionally colonising brick or concrete walls within urban areas.



Earina. Photographer: Department of Conservation, Licence: Public domain.



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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Epiphytic or rupestral, rhizomatous, perennial, producing numerous leafy, unbranched, long persistent, wiry, cane-like stems up to 1 m long. **Rhizomes** extensive, much intertwined and firmly attached to substrate, fleshy, more or less spongy, initially creamy white maturing buff-yellow. **Leaf-sheaths** imbricating, persistent, distichously arranged, 5–15 mm long, 2–3 mm diameter, not split, tubular, flattened, each overlapping with and covering the lower $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ of the leaf-sheath above, exposed surface ivory to pale whitish-yellow, maculate with small orbicular to ovate dark purple-black spots. Leaf-sheath junction with leaf lamina not flared. **Leaves** usually flexuose or slightly curled in upper $\frac{1}{3}$; lamina short-lived, disarticulating at leaf-sheath junction, 1–3-nerved, 60–200 × 3–5 mm, green to dark green, linear-lanceolate, widest near base and tapering gradually to an acute, minutely acicular tip; midrib of upper lamina surface mostly weakly depressed, hardly prominent, lateral veins mostly inconspicuous. **Inflorescence** a racemose panicle. **Panicle** up to 100 mm long, mostly pendulous; racemes 2–12, usually well spaced on fine, slender, wiry axis, each 30–40 mm long; floral bracts c. 3.5–4.2 mm long, scarcely overlapping, prominently longitudinally ridged, completely covering the very short pedicels. **Perianth** 10–12 mm diameter, opening widely (flaring), pale, slightly greenish-cream to greenish yellow, or completely white. **Sepals** elliptic, subacute. **Petals** slightly broader and more obtuse. **Labellum** broader and very conspicuous, yellowish, yellow-orange, deep apricot or completely white, flaring widely at flowering, broadly oblong with broader proximal portion connect by a narrow waist-like neck to the almost equally broad distal lobe; base with two inconspicuous ridges leading down to a small pit-like nectary. **Column** shorter than labellum, narrow to base, wings absent or minute, pollinia long-oval. **Capsules** elliptic-ovoid, ovoid, deeply, longitudinally grooved, yellow green to green maturing grey.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

Key to native orchids of New Zealand

SIMILAR TAXA

Earina aestivalis Cheeseman which is similar is distinguished by its usually more compact growth habit, and shorter (up to 600 mm long), fewer, wider (up to 8 mm long) leaves. The leaf-sheath at the leaf junction is widely flaring and the leaves are deeply 3-nerved with the central midrib, broad, prominent and deeply channelled, and the lateral veins very conspicuous. The leaf sheath spotting is more obvious and the spots larger and darker. *E. aestivalis* tends to flowering later (December to March) otherwise the flowers are scarcely different.

FLOWERING

August–January

FLOWER COLOURS

Orange, Yellow

FRUITING

September–April

LIFE CYCLE

Minute seeds are wind dispersed (Thorsen et al., 2009).

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown in a hanging basket in standard orchid mix. Often can be strapped to a tree trunk and provided it is kept moist during the drier months it grows readily. This species does best in semi-shade. The orange-green to yellow-orange flowers are produced in profusion and are especially attractive. Occasional white flowered forms also occur which are rather unusual. Should not be removed from the wild.

ETYMOLOGY

earina: Springtime

mucronata: Short, sharp pointed

WHERE TO BUY

Occasionally available from specialist native plant nurseries.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007. Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

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.

Thorsen MJ, Dickinson KJM, Seddon PJ. 2009. Seed dispersal systems in the New Zealand flora. *Perspectives in Plant Ecology, Evolution and Systematics* 11: 285–309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ppees.2009.06.001>.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/earina-mucronata/>