

# Libertia grandiflora

## COMMON NAME

mikoikoi, NZ iris

## SYNONYMS

*Renelalmia 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.



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## 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

