

Libertia mooreae

COMMON NAME

Moore's iris, Moore's mikoikoi

SYNONYMS

None (first described in 2002)

FAMILY

Iridaceae

AUTHORITY

Libertia mooreae Blanchon, B.G.Murray et Braggins

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Monocots

NVS CODE

LIBMOO

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 114

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | Not Threatened

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | Not Threatened

2009 | Not Threatened

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic.

HABITAT

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



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Plants consisting of leafy fans, closely bunched on short, much branched rhizomes. Leaves 100–400 × 1–4 mm, green to glaucous, slightly falcate, the two sides similar, although in some accessions they are all concave on the same face; leaf bases red-purple; veins numerous; margins finely scabrid; leaf in transverse section a flattened convex lens shape, two rows of vascular bundles present centrally, marginal vascular bundle present, sclerenchyma present on inside of leaf sheath. Inflorescences long (140–560 mm), carrying flowers above leaves; peduncles two-fifths the length of the inflorescence. Panicle broad, usually openly branched; lower bracts long (20–60 mm), green and lanceolate, upper bracts short and brown, occurring singly; 1–7 flowers per branch. Pedicels slender and delicate, glabrous, 10–35 mm long. Perianth bud often pigmented externally, often 2× as long as ovary at anthesis. Flowers 10–20 mm diameter; tepals all white internally, inner tepals orbicular, sometimes overlapping outer tepals; outer tepals > ½ length of inner tepals but < one-third the area, elliptical, beige or pink, boat-shaped. Staminal filaments very shortly connate; anthers 2–3 mm long, yellow. Ovary dark green, ½ the length of perianth bud; style branches not winged, usually pointing upwards. Capsule small, rarely reaching 5–8 mm long, 3–5 mm diameter, barrel-shaped with ribs, ripening from green to brown or black, partially or occasionally fully dehiscent by short loculicidal openings. Seeds 1.0 × 1.0–1.5 mm, globose to angular, with reticulate-foveolate surface patterning, yellow to yellow-orange.

SIMILAR TAXA

Libertia mooreae differs from *L. grandiflora*, *L. ixioides*, and *L. peregrinans* by plant size and leaf structure. It is generally smaller than the other species, and its leaves have equally spaced veins, unlike the other species, which have veins coalescing centrally to form a thickened midrib. *L. mooreae* often also has bluish, concave leaves. It differs from *L. grandiflora* by its semi-dehiscent, barrel-shaped capsules, purple-red leaf bases, and yellowish seeds; from *L. ixioides* by its tall inflorescence, orbicular petals, small sepals, and green leaves in summer; and from *L. peregrinans* and hybrids by its lack of elongate rhizomes. *Libertia mooreae* differs from *L. micrantha* in flower shape and rhizome and leaf anatomy.

FLOWERING

August – November

FLOWER COLOURS

Red/Pink, White

FRUITING

December – February

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easily grown from fresh seed and by the division of established plants. This species is tolerant of a wide range of situations - except permanently water logged soils. However, it does best in semi-shade. *Libertia mooreae* is an attractive plant that deserves to be more widely cultivated than it is.

ETYMOLOGY

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

mooreae: Honours Lucy B. Moore (1906-87), former botanist at DSIR Botany Division, who prepared most of the last comprehensive treatment of *Hebe* (in Allan 1961).

ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Blanchon et al. (2002)

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Blanchon, D.J.; Murray, B.G.; Braggins, J.E. 2002: A taxonomic revision of *Libertia* (Iridaceae) in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Botany* 40: 437–456.

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/libertia-mooreae/>