

Pterostylis humilis

COMMON NAME

greenhood

SYNONYMS

None

FAMILY

Orchidaceae

AUTHORITY

Pterostylis humilis Rogers

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Native

ENDEMIC TAXON

Yes

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Orchids

NVS CODE

PTEHUM

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 44

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon

2004 | Not Threatened

DISTRIBUTION

Endemic. New Zealand: North Island (Central Volcanic Plateau and Mount Taranaki/Egmont), South Island (in the west from North-west Nelson to about the Buller River).

HABITAT

Montane to subalpine in beech (*Nothofagus* Blume) forest and subalpine scrub. Often in deep drifts of leaf litter, or amongst mosses. Sometimes on bare ground or growing at the base of boulders.



Mount Ruapehu. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 27/12/2008, Licence: CC BY.



Mount Ruapehu. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 27/12/2008, Licence: CC BY.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Terrestrial, tuberous, glabrous, spring to summer-green perennial herb, forming colonies through vegetative extension. Plant at flowering 45–50–(150) mm tall. **Stem** erect, smooth, dark green, to blue-green, immersed within a loose basal rosette of leaves until the fruiting ovary elongates the stem. **Leaves** erect to somewhat spreading, 3–4, margins entire, though usually undulose in the basal $\frac{1}{3}$, overtopping the flower; lamina 40–90 × 15–25 mm, dark green to blue-green, broadly elliptic to oblong, apex obtuse to broadly subacute, base gradually narrowing into a broadly winged sheathing petiole. **Flower** solitary, erect, dark green, white striped. **Ovary** mostly erect. **Dorsal sepal** 20 mm tall, erect then horizontal; apex shortly acuminate. **Lateral sepals** diverging at a narrow angle, initially erect, apex acuminate to shortly caudate, overtopping galea. **Petals** almost as long as dorsal sepal, broad almost to apex. **Labellum** elliptic, shortly recurved, cucullate, scarcely protruding, apex acute, glabrous. **Column** slightly shorter than labellum; stigma prominent, broadly cordate, upward facing.

MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to native orchids of New Zealand](#)

SIMILAR TAXA

Very close to *P. venosa* Colenso from which it differs by the prominent, upturned, heart-shaped, stigma, which is little longer than wide, and by the glabrous labellum surface.

FLOWERING

November–January

FLOWER COLOURS

Green, White

FRUITING

December–March

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Difficult—should not be removed from the wild. Basic orchid mix consists of 2 parts medium coarse sand, ideally clean river sand; 2 parts soil, humus or leaf-mould; 1 part weathered sawdust or rotting wood; 1 part granulated bark. For *Pterostylis* shade of 50% and pots kept evenly moist.

THREATS

No apparent threats but not very common.

ETYMOLOGY

pterostylis: Winged column

humilis: Lowest, dwarf, small, slight

WHERE TO BUY

Not commercially available

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.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

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MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/pterostylis-humilis/>