



## *Thelymitra cyanea*

### Common Name(s):

swamp sun orchid, striped sun orchid

### Current Threat Status (2012):

Not Threatened

### Distribution:

Indigenous. North, South, Stewart, Chatham and Auckland Islands. Also in Australia

### Habitat:

Coastal to montane (up to 800 m a.s.l.) mostly in acidic, often restiad-dominated peat bogs. Also found in damp ground within gumland scrub. This species responds well to frequent disturbance and burning but is able to tolerate dense restiad vegetation and so is often the last sun orchid to persist in dense *Sporadanthus* F.Muell dominated vegetation

### Features\*:

Terrestrial, tuberous, glabrous, spring to summer-green perennial herb, growing in colonies of 4-20 plants arising through vegetative extension. Plants at flower up to 800 mm tall. Leaf solitary, erect, to suberect, very fleshy to subcoriaceous, longitudinally ribbed, deeply channelled and keeled with margins thickly rounded (appearing trilobed in cross-section), 50-300 x 10-18 mm, green to yellow-green, linear-lanceolate, base closely sheathing.

Flowering stem stiffly erect, rather wiry, green to yellow-green. Bracts 1-2(-3), foliaceous, closely-sheathing, fleshy, of similar colour to stem and leaf. Raceme bearing 1-6 flowers. Flowers 10-20 mm diameter, usually blue with darker blue or purple stripes on the petals, dorsal and lateral sepals (very rarely also on labellum); otherwise white with green or pale blue stripes or pink with brown stripes; segments widely spreading, dorsal and lateral sepals slightly narrower and longer than petals. Petals broadly elliptic. Labellum broadly obovate, often slightly crenate, or undulose, apex often mucronate. Column short up to 6 mm long, erect, white, post anther lobe greatly reduced (appearing as if absent) bearing a small area of blister-like crowded calli; column arms yellow more or less erect, ribbon-like, flattened, and twisted inwards one to one-and-a-half times in a loose spiral, apex unevenly lobed without cilia. Anther bent forward, well exposed, apex bifid (appearing as two short horns).

### Flowering:

October - March

### Fruiting:

December - June

### Threats:

Not Threatened

### \*Attribution:

Description adapted from Moore and Edgar (1970).

### References and further reading:

Moore, L.B.; Edgar, E. 1970: Flora of New Zealand. Vol. II. Government Printer, Wellington.

### For more information, visit:

[http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora\\_details.asp?ID=2271](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2271)



**Caption:** *Thelymitra cyanea*

**Photographer:** Kevin Matthews



**Caption:** *Thelymitra cyanea*

**Photographer:** Kevin Matthews