



## *Thelymitra ixioides*

### Common Name(s):

spotted sun orchid

### Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

### Distribution:

Indigenous. North and South Islands. Also in Australia.

### Habitat:

Coastal to montane (up to 900 m a.s.l.). In open ground, especially clay pans within gumland scrub but also colonising roadside banks, road gravel, stable dune slacks, and well-lighted but sparsely vegetated ground under taller scrub and forest. Sometimes in beech (*Nothofagus Blume*) forest or on the margins of montane streams. Rarely in peat bogs.

### Features\*:

Terrestrial, tuberous, glabrous, spring to summer-green perennial herb, either solitary or in small colonies of 2-4 plants. Plant at flower up to 700 mm tall. Leaf solitary, fleshy, deeply channelled and more or less longitudinally ribbed, 50-120 mm long, reddish-green to almost silvery reddish-green near base otherwise yellow-green to dark green, linear-lanceolate, base closely sheathing, undersides finely rugose. Flowering stem stiffly erect, wiry, reddish green to silvery-green. Bracts 1-2(-3), foliaceous, closely-sheathing, fleshy, bases dark reddish-green to silvery reddish-green otherwise green to yellow-green. Raceme bearing (1-)5(-20) flowers (usually much less). Flowers 11-18 mm diameter, blue, segments widely spreading, dorsal sepal and petals with darker blue or purple spots. Sepals and petals very broad. Labellum distinctly rounded. Column up to 5 mm long, erect, bluish grading to dark purple near apex; column arms flattened, cilia white, largely marginal, column arms projecting from anterior margin of the side lobule, cilia white or mauve; post anther lobe slightly taller than anther, erect, not cucullate, the back and apex bearing numerous violet or yellow finger-like calli (the tallest yellow or orange); side lobules distinct, usually taller, yellow, margins mostly lacinate.

### Flowering:

September - December

### Fruiting:

November - March

### Threats:

Not Threatened but hardly common either. Probably better classified as biologically sparse. This species rarely occurs in any abundance at any particular site and is very vulnerable to roadworks, animal browse, loss through succession to taller forest and because it has attractive flowers - plant collectors.

### \*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=2272](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=2272)



**Caption:** Pinehaven, Upper Hutt. Nov 2008.

**Photographer:** Jeremy Rolfe



**Caption:** Waikumete, Auckland. Oct 2009.

**Photographer:** Jeremy Rolfe