



Chiloglottis formicifera

Common Name(s):

ant orchid

Current Threat Status (2012):

Non Resident Native - Vagrant

Distribution:

In New Zealand known from only one historic site near Kaitaia. Abundant in eastern Australia

Habitat:

The sole New Zealand record came from under dense shrubland. In Australia this species is widespread though often sparsely distributed, and tends to grow near streams in deep drifts of leaf litter.

Features*:

Terrestrial orchid forming dense colonies. Leaves up to 60 x 25 mm, dark green, ovate-lanceolate with undulose margins. Flower stem up to 100 mm tall, bearing a solitary, narrow, flower up to 20 mm diameter, segments mostly dark green with brownish markings, or brownish-green. Perianth segments up to 20 mm long. Dorsal sepal erect and incurved, lateral sepals recurved in the upper two thirds, divergent, apex not clavate, petals either spreading or reflexed against ovary. Labellum up to 12 x 7 mm, trapeziform, greenish to purple-green. Lamina callus ant-shaped, central, a band of pink to black glands extending from near the base of the lamina apex; basal transverse glands largest; the upper glands sessile. Fruiting capsules not seen in New Zealand.

Flowering:

September - November

Fruiting:

Fruits apparently not formed in New Zealand

Threats:

The only known New Zealand occurrence was eliminated through a combination of habitat loss and over collection by an amateur botanist. Had it survived here it is doubtful if it would have set seed as its pollination vector is absent from New Zealand.

***Attribution:**

Fact Sheet prepared for NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 14 April 2007: Description adapted from Jones (1998) and Moore & Edgar (1970).

References and further reading:

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