



## *Townsonia deflexa*

### Common Name(s):

None known

### Current Threat Status (2012):

At Risk - Naturally Uncommon

### Distribution:

Endemic. North, South, Stewart, Auckland and Campbell Islands

### Habitat:

Lowland to upper montane and subalpine habitats (confined to upper montane and subalpine in northern part of range). A small, easily overlooked orchid favouring mossy logs and deep moss patches where it forms small diffuse colonies. It is often (though not exclusively, e.g., Stewart Island) associated with Nothofagus Blume forests.

### Features\*:

Dark green to bright green slender 50-150 mm orchid, spreading through mossy patches and leaf litter usually in forest. Stem erect, very slender almost translucent. Cauline leaf confined to flowering plants, this 10 mm long, green, orbicular to oblong, apiculate, sessile, usually positioned at mid section of stem. Leaf of sterile and flowering plants, distinctly petiolate, arising from horizontal rhizomes near to or remote from flowering stems; lamina 10 mm long, orbicular to broadly ovate, obtuse to apiculate, rounded or subcordate at base, margin more or less finely crenate. Inflorescence a 10-20 mm long raceme; 1-4-flowered. Floral bracts small, membranous, translucent. Perianth 5 mm long, horizontal and deflexed, greenish. Sepals with thick rounded keels and more or less involute margins; dorsal sepal broad, subacute; lateral sepals slightly longer, minutely cucullate. Petals very much shorter, oblong, erect. Labellum shorter than sepals, broad-ovate, partly embracing column; apex more or less obtuse, recurved; proximal part concave, marked by median triangular thickening and 2 low longitudinal ridges of basal calli. Column shorter than labellum; wings broad throughout, sharply truncate or almost toothed above. Anther partly hidden behind very prominent stigma.

### Flowering:

November - February

### Fruiting:

December - April

### Threats:

An apparently naturally uncommon, biologically sparse species that does not seem to have ever been subject to any significant decline. However, some of its northern South Island, West Coast habitats are threatened by coal mining.

### \*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, 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=330](http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=330)



**Caption:** Close up of *Townsonia deflexa*

**Photographer:** Ian St George



**Caption:** Plant shows a sterile leaf

**Photographer:** Eric Scanlen