



Pterostylis micromega

Common Name(s):

Swamp Greenhood

Current Threat Status (2012):

Threatened - Nationally Endangered

Distribution:

Endemic. North, South and Chatham Islands. Once known from Kaitaia to Wellington, North Nelson and the Chatham Islands. The species is still present in the Huntly Basin, (Waikato), Volcanic Plateau, near Wanganui and in the Wairarapa. A plant was also known, until recently from Knuckle Hill, North West Nelson. That plant appears to have died out naturally. It was last reliably recorded from the Chatham Islands in the late 1800s.

Habitat:

Coastal, lowland to subalpine (0 - 1000 m a.s.l.). A plant of bogs, fens and swamps, ranging from acidic to eutrophic. It often forms colonies of 5-30 plants, ranging from large-leaved non-flowering juveniles through to flowering adults. It can be found growing under willows (*Salix* spp.).

Features*:

Orchid 150-380 mm tall. Stem smooth, lower internodes short, becoming progressively longer toward apex. Basal leaves usually in a somewhat loose rosette, though when in exposed conditions then a compact rosette; petiole 5-10 mm; lamina 35-50 mm, pale green to grey-green, broad-elliptic, subacute, margins often but not always finely undulate. Upper leaves sessile, ovate to narrowly ovate, channelled, and weakly keeled, becoming sheathing near flower, upper most often reaching or just overtopping flower. Flower conspicuous, solitary, erect, perianth white or cream. Dorsal sepal, green, 25-40 mm, arcuate, apex acuminate to shortly caudate, ascending to decurved; lateral sepals green and white striped at base, diverging at a narrow angle, apex caudate, overtopping galea. Petals white, shorter than dorsal sepal, acuminate. Labellum red-brown, narrow-triangular, arched, markedly protruding, apex narrowly obtuse. Column much shorter than labellum; stigma narrow-oblong, flat.

Flowering:

November - February

Fruiting:

November - March

Threats:

Drainage of habitat; habitat invasion by weeds (in the Waikato royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) seems to be the main weed threat); unrestricted wetland access by stock, and wild animals such as deer, pigs, and possums have proved to be a problem at some sites. Nevertheless this species requires some habitat disturbance to thrive, and soon succumbs if its habitat becomes too densely vegetated.

***Attribution:**

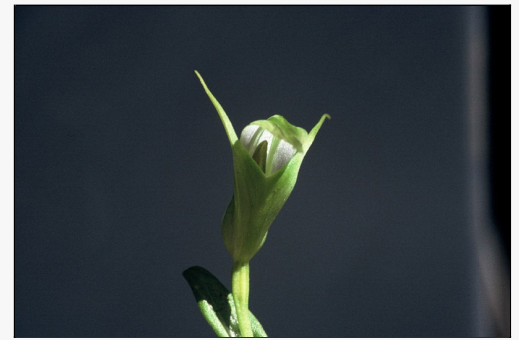
Fact Sheet prepared from NZPCN by P.J. de Lange 1 October 2003. Description subsequently published in de Lange et al. (2007).

References and further reading:

de Lange, P.; Rolfe, J. St George, I. Sawyer J. 2007: Wild orchids of the lower North Island. Department of Conservation, Wellington.

For more information, visit:

http://nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.asp?ID=36



Caption: Opuatia Wetland, January 1991

Photographer: G. M. Crowcroft



Caption: *Pterostylis micromega*
Photographer: Gillian Crowcroft,
December 1990, Opuatia Wetlands